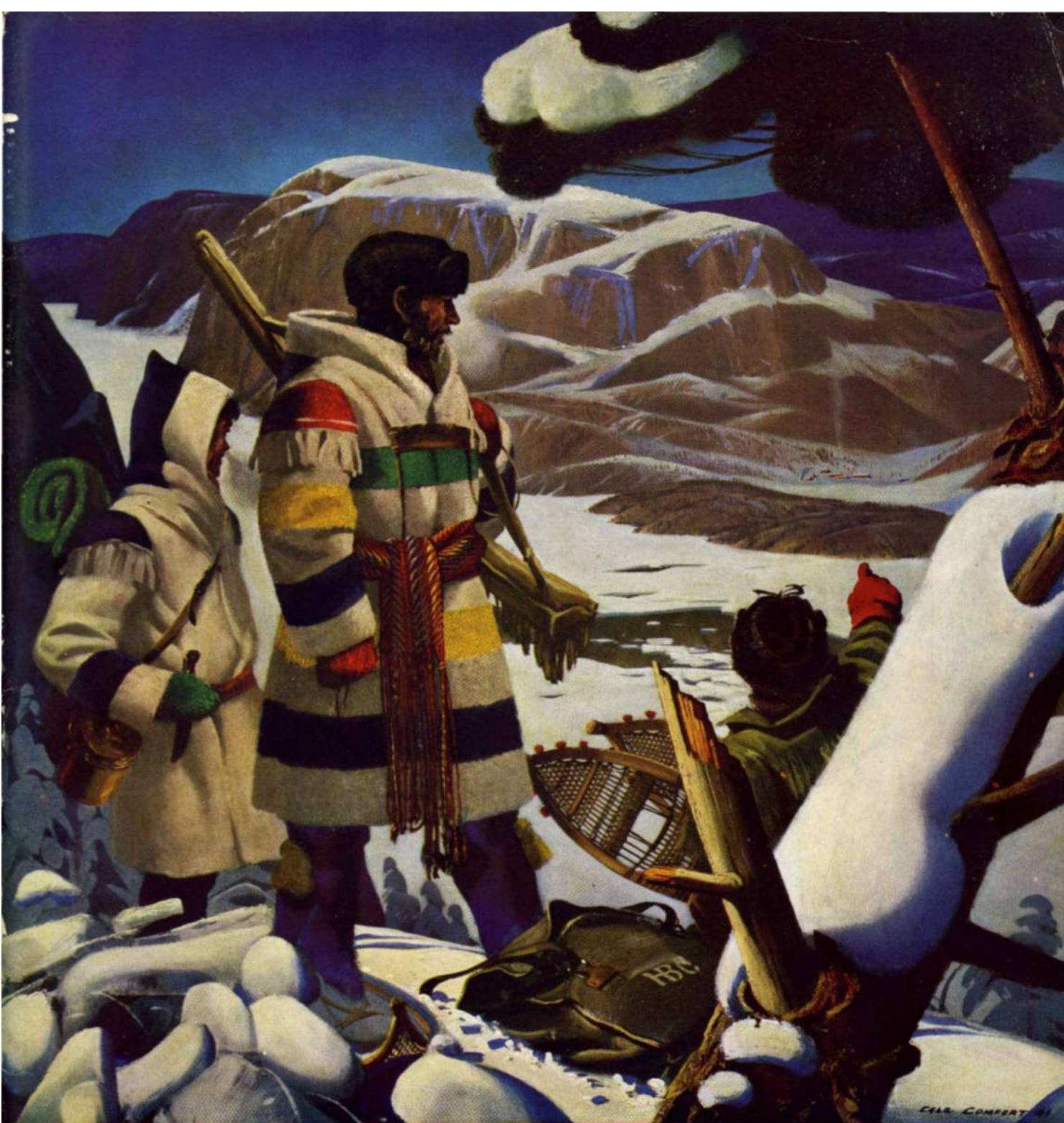




The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY **Hudson's Bay Company.** OUTFIT 272 DEC. 1941

INCORPORATED 27th MAY 1870

Governor's Christmas Message

ANOTHER Christmas is drawing near, and our thoughts go out to our friends in the performance of their duties—in the fighting and auxiliary forces, in the provision and distribution of necessary supplies or in daily tasks at home.

We have entered upon the third year of the war. The scope of the conflict has been extended and may be extended still further, but for us and for all freedom-loving peoples the issue remains the same: are we to submit to slavery based on the doctrine of might, to the sacrifice of all our ideals; or are we to live our lives in Christian brotherhood?

To all nations it is being made clear that there is no other choice. Conquered nations lie under the unspeakable terror and violence of Nazi rule; unconquered nations have only one course open to them—to fight until victory is won. It is for each of us, therefore, to decide how best we can do our duty, how best we can fulfil our individual task to the limit of our endurance.

After two years of war the people of the British Empire and our Allies are more resolute, more courageous and more determined than ever before. Here in London devastation and death have taken their toll, but this has only served to stiffen the will to resistance of every citizen. And so it is with all throughout the Empire.

We can harbour no sense of false security; we cannot rely upon remoteness as a defence against Nazi domination, nor can we hope that other people will win our battles for us. Only by a united and supreme effort can we succeed.

And so I wish for us all—the will to win through; the determination to do our duty to the end.

PA Cooper.
Governor.



Snowshoe Tracks

S. R. Crone

The Beaver

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OUTFIT 272

DECEMBER 1941

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PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

Hudson's Bay Company.

INCORPORATED 27TH MAY 1670.

HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE

WINNIPEG, CANADA

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Ballantyne the Brave

by C. Parnell

If studious youth no longer crave,
Their ancient appetites forgot,
Kingston and Ballantyne the brave,
And Cooper of the wood and wave,
So be it also! And may I
And all my pirates share the grave
Where these, and their creations lie.

—ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

WHEN Robert Michael Ballantyne became apprenticed to the Hudson's Bay Company a hundred years ago, he would surely have been astounded to know that his life work would be the writing of boys' books. As a boy he was fond of story telling, and fond of adventure; but the idea of living adventure seems to have appealed to him much more than writing about it.

At that time, the hope of discovering the Northwest Passage was still firing the imagination of the British people, made keenly aware of it by the recent naval expeditions of Franklin, Back, Ross, and others. It so happened that Ballantyne's father was reading one day an account of the explorations of Thomas Simpson and Peter Warren Dease along the Arctic coasts of what is now Canada, when he suddenly dropped his newspaper and looked at his son. "Bobby," he said, "how would you like to go into the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, and discover the Northwest Passage?"

And it was that suggestion which determined, not only the fate of R. M. Ballantyne, but also, through him, the fate of many another British lad in search of adventure.

Robert "Ballantyne" (as his contract spells it), of the city of Edinburgh, was duly apprenticed to the Company on May 31, 1841, shortly after his sixteenth birthday. His rate of pay was to be £20 for the first year, £25 for the second, £30 for the third, £40 for the fourth, and £50 for the fifth. Of his life during the next six years we know a good deal, for he set down most of his experiences in the service while he was

living at one of the posts on the Lower St. Lawrence, and this account was published in 1848 as his first book: *HUDSON'S BAY; or Everyday Life in the Wilds of North America*.

He left Gravesend on the maiden voyage of the *Prince Rupert*—sixth of the Company's ships to bear that name—in consort with the *Prince Albert* and the *Prince of Wales*. After calling at Stornoway, they crossed the Atlantic in heavy weather and arrived in August at York Factory.

Ballantyne was destined to spend two years at York, but he was first slated for Red River, and in September he left the Bay with the returning Portage la Loche Brigade of boats. His first Canadian winter was spent at Fort Garry, being "broken in to the desk," as he calls it. The life of adventure which he had hoped to find in the Hudson's Bay territories must then have seemed as far away and as inaccessible as the Northwest Passage.

"It is needless to describe the agonies I endured," he writes, "while sitting hour after hour, on a long legged stool, my limbs quivering for want of their accustomed exercise, while the twittering of birds, barking of dogs, lowing of cows, and neighing of horses seemed to invite me to join them in the woods."

He was at Red River when the body of Thomas Simpson the explorer—whose doughty deeds had inspired him to join the Company—was brought in to Fort Garry. The story was that he had committed suicide. But Ballantyne thought, "with many of Mr. Simpson's friends and former companions, that he did not kill himself."

In the spring, when the Mackenzie's River Brigade of six or seven boats set out for the northwest, Ballantyne went with them as far as Norway House.

The Council of the Northern Department of Rupert's Land was in session there, and they resolved that he should stay at that post for a year. Chief Factor Donald Ross (whom Ballantyne calls "Russ" in his book) was in charge at that time, and the Reverend James Evans was active among the Indians of Rossville, to whom he was teaching his new invention—syllable writing. Ballantyne gives a description of the Christmas feast he attended at Rossville, when the Indians showed what they could do in the way of eating.

The opening sentences, and the signature, of Ballantyne's contract, apprenticing him to the Company for five years.

An Agreement, made this thirty first day of May
in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty One
BETWEEN *Robert Ballantyne of the City of Edinburgh*
in the Parish of St. Andrew in the County of Mid Lothian
in South Britain of the one Part, and The Governor and Company of Adventurers of
England Trading into Hudson's Bay by William Smith
their Agent of the other part as follows. —

Robert M. Ballantyne

But it was in the spring that Norway House really came to life. Then the various brigades arrived, manned by the picturesque and hardy voyageurs, of whose appearance the young apprentice gives a detailed description. First arrival was the outbound Portage la Loche Brigade. This was followed in quick succession by the brigades from Ile à la Crosse, from Red River, and from the upper reaches of the Saskatchewan—the latter “the largest and most noisy that halts at Norway House. It generally numbers from fifteen to twenty boats, filled with the wildest men in the service.” Finally, came the light canoes from Canada, bringing some new apprentices, beside whom the eighteen-year-old Ballantyne must have felt like a seasoned northerner.

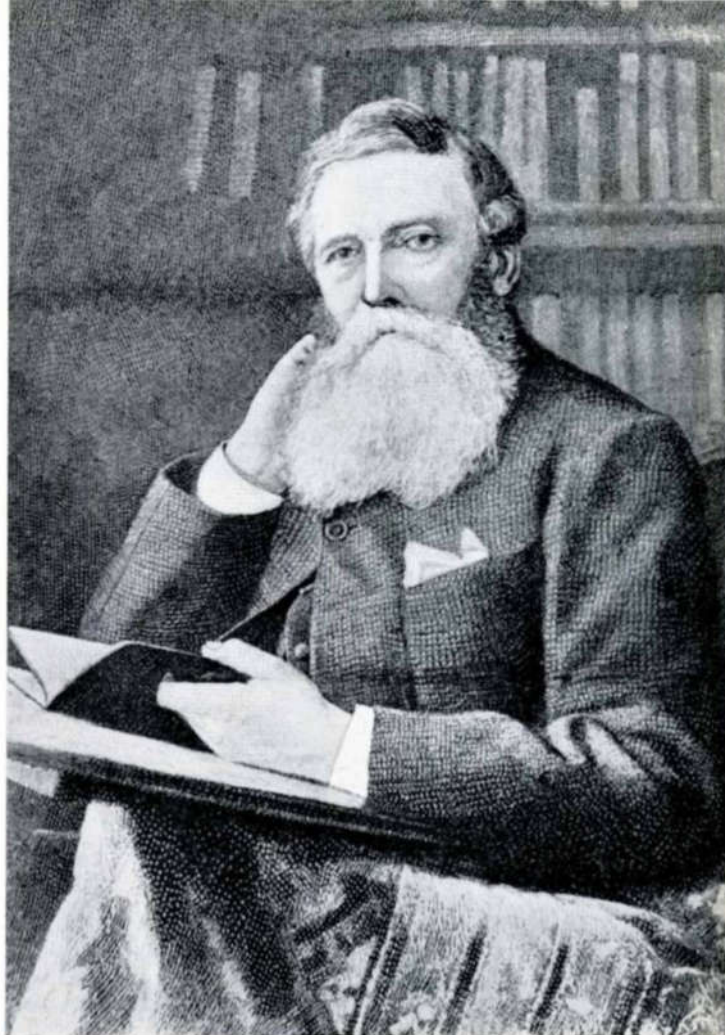
In June 1843, he received orders to embark for York Factory. This great seaboard depot he paraphrased as “a monstrous blot on a swampy spot, with a partial view of the frozen sea.” But he seems to have enjoyed himself there with his congenial friends, “Crusty,” the skipper, the postmaster, and the doctor, with whom he shared Bachelors’ Hall. His description of Christmas at York Factory is given elsewhere in this issue of *The Beaver*.

In June 1845, his “two years of fun and frolic” on the coast of Hudson Bay ended with his departure for Lachine via Lake Winnipeg. He travelled to Norway House with two Indians in a small canoe, and, after spending a month there among old friends, set out on August 20 in a North canoe. On the Winnipeg River the party met Chief Factor Dr. John Rae, on his way to York Factory “for the purpose of fitting out at that post an expedition for the survey of the small part of the North American coast left unexplored by Messrs. Dease and Simpson.” The young author gives a striking word-picture of the great traveller, concluding with the remark that the doctor was entering upon his task “not with the vague and uncertain notions of Back and Franklin, but with a pretty correct apprehension of the probable routine of procedure, and the experience of a great many years spent in the service of the Hudson’s Bay Company.”

Ballantyne was enchanted with the country between the Lake of the Woods and Lake Superior, and describes in some detail his voyage through the border lake land to Fort William. The party left that lakehead fort on September 25 in a *canot de maître*, and travelling, often by night, along the north shore of Lake Superior, arrived at Sault Ste. Marie eighteen days later. The usual time for this voyage was eight to ten days, but the equinoctial storms forced them to “lie by” for long periods.

At the Sault, Ballantyne found a number of American soldiers quartered at the fort on the south side of the rapids. “This may be considered,” he wrote, “the extreme outskirts of civilization, being the first place where I had seen any number of people collected together who were unconnected with the Hudson’s Bay Company.”

Coasting along the north shore of Lake Huron, the party ascended the French River, and after paddling through Lake Nipissing, reached the Ottawa on October 19. The first village they came to was Aylmer, a little way west of the present city of Hull, P.Q., and Ballantyne describes the feelings of delight he experienced in sauntering about the streets after his long banishment from the civilized world, “gazing in joy and admiration upon everything and everybody, but especially the ladies.”



R. M. Ballantyne in his library.

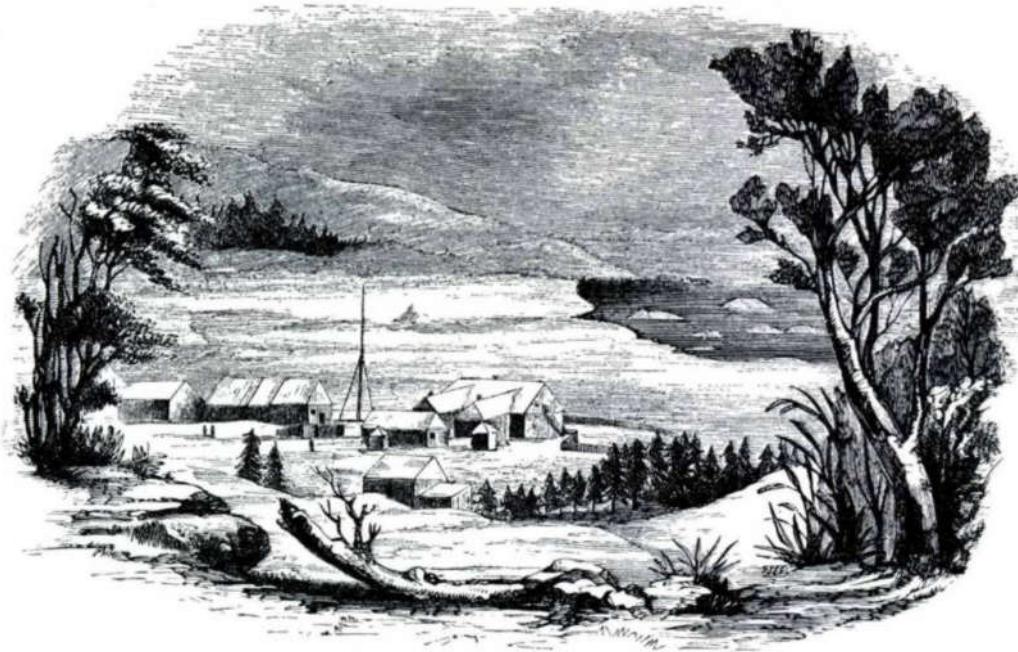
Next day they came to Bytown, now Ottawa, and continuing down the Ottawa River, came at last, on October 25, to their journey’s end at Lachine.

There Ballantyne stayed under the watchful eye of Sir George Simpson, until January, when he left with Chief Trader George Barnston—or “Mr. Stone” as he calls him—for Tadoussac on the Lower St. Lawrence.

They travelled by stage sleigh to Quebec, often upsetting into snowdrifts on the way, and from there in a farmer’s sleigh to a point beyond Baie St. Paul where the road ended. Thence they walked about eighteen miles to a lumber camp, where the boss gave them a lift in his sleigh as far as Canard River, and in a short time they came out on the south shore of the mighty Saguenay. “This river,” says Ballantyne, “owing to its immense depth, never freezes over at its mouth; so we crossed it in a boat, and on the evening of the 7th of February we arrived at the post of Tadoussac.”

The picture by Charles Comfort shows the two travellers standing on the high bank looking across the river’s mouth. The man pointing to the buildings is the post servant, who has rowed across the open water and climbed the hill to meet them. Ballantyne carries a Hudson’s Bay copper kettle and the green blanket to which he often refers.

He stayed at Tadoussac for only a month, then continued on his way down the St. Lawrence to Ile Jérémie, just west of Bersimis. In April he went on to Seven Islands, and it was there that he began to



The Hudson's Bay post at Tadoussac. A woodcut from "Hudson's Bay," made from a sketch done by Ballantyne on the spot.

write the story of his life in the service, which determined his career.

"The Record," he confessed later, "was never meant to see the light of day. It was written solely for the eyes of my mother, but it may be said that it was the means of leading me ultimately into the path of my life work." The writing of this account was to him simply a method of killing time. "I had no books, no game to shoot, no boat wherewith to prosecute fishing in the bay, and no prospect of seeing anyone to speak to for weeks, if not months, to come. But I had pen and ink, and, by great good fortune, was in possession of a blank paper book, fully an inch thick. These, then, were the circumstances in which I began my first book."

He stayed at Seven Islands till August, then returned via Tadoussac to Montreal. There he ended his seven years in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, and in May 1847 he sailed from New York for England.

He does not explain when he finished writing the story of his life in the wilds of North America, but he says that when it was done, "and not long afterwards submitted to the—I need hardly say favorable—criticism of my mother, I had not the most distant idea of taking to authorship as a profession. Even when a printer cousin, seeing the manuscript, offered to print it, and the well-known Blackwood of Edinburgh, seeing the book, offered to publish it—and did publish it—my ambition was still so absolutely asleep that I did not again put pen to paper in that way for eight years thereafter."

The book was published in 1848, and of course was read by many in the service of the Company. Some of them regarded it much as present-day Company men look upon the effusions of modern writers on the North. Typical of these was Chief Factor James Anderson, who in 1850 wrote to Donald Ross: "I have just finished Ballantyne's book. It is the work, apparently, of an amiable young man with a strong perception of the ridiculous (*vide*, the dinner at Gravesend) but void of originality and vigour in a rather remarkable degree. His everyday life in Hudson's Bay was easy enough; I wish he had seen some of my everyday life for many years."

was employed with the publishing house of Constable in Edinburgh, but he followed Nelson's advice, and started to write his first novel.

The result was *Snowflakes and Sunbeams: or, The Young Fur Traders*, later known only by the latter part of the title. The book, published in 1855, was a success, and another was indicated. "When casting about for a suitable subject," he explained later, "I happened to meet with an old retired Nor'wester who had spent an adventurous life in Rupert's Land. Among other duties, he had been sent to establish an outpost of the Hudson's Bay Company at Ungava Bay, one of the most dreary parts of a desolate region. On hearing what I wanted, he sat down and wrote a long narrative of his proceedings there, which he placed at my disposal, and this furnished me with the foundation of *Ungava*."

This was probably Nicol Finlayson, who with Erland Erlandson had established Fort Chimo in 1830, and had retired from the service in 1855. He was a "Nor'wester" only in the sense that he had lived in the country which Ballantyne often refers to as the Nor'West.

After the publication of his second novel, Ballantyne's imagination began to run dry, as far as the fur trade was concerned. So he chose a new field. The result was *The Coral Island*, and after that he never returned to his first love. Books followed in rapid succession, dealing with such varied subjects as the London Fire Brigade, the Cornish mines, the Lifeboat Service, the pirates of Algiers, the General Post Office, and so on. Altogether, the manuscripts of more than eighty books flowed from his industrious pen.

Most of his books are noted for their fidelity to fact, as much as for their romantic flavour. And so attractive did he make the Canadian north appear, that his first three books persuaded many a young Englishman and Scotsman to join the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. One of these, Christy Harding, now retired, who was in charge of York Factory for some time, has said that: "Of the many books of adventure by different writers on life in the wilds, those of R. M. Ballantyne can be placed in the front rank for faithfulness of detail and correctness of observation. His descriptions of conditions are nearly perfect."

The 1941 Voyage of R.M.S NASCOPIE

Photos and Story by J. W. Anderson

THE 272nd annual voyage made by the Company vessel "Trading into Hudson's Bay" was successfully completed in October by that veteran ship R.M.S. *Nascopie* under somewhat difficult conditions. This 272nd voyage has probably been one of the most arduous in the thirty-year history of this ice-scarred ship.

Due to a late spring, and prevailing northerly winds, the field ice was all driven on to the south shore of Hudson Strait for a depth of thirty-five to forty miles, down the Labrador coast and down the east coast of Hudson Bay as far as Cape Smith. The first ice was actually seen in the Straits of Belle Isle, north bound, but as we were able to keep well out to sea, no delay was occasioned until we attempted to enter Hebron. We lost three days getting into Hebron and another three days getting out.

The voyage was relatively ice-free to Resolution Island and Lake Harbour; but once the Hudson Strait was crossed, we were again held up trying to enter Sugluk. From Sugluk to Wolstenholme is only a distance of some sixty-five miles, but it took two arduous days for the *Nascopie* to reach there. Only by dint of continual driving, backing up and trying again, was the short distance accomplished even in two days. But the good old ship worked splendidly, and only when she encountered solid masses of ice was she completely stuck. A whole day was lost, held fast in the ice, after leaving Wolstenholme; but once out of this ice field a clear run was enjoyed to Cape Dorset, Nottingham Island and Southampton Island. We ran into ice again off Cape Smith and lost time entering this port, but we had a clear, ice-free run to Port Harrison and Churchill, where we arrived eight days late.

At Churchill we took on bunkers and made connections with the annual Canadian National Railways' Churchill excursion. The ship was dressed for the occasion, and practically all of the excursionists made a visit on board the *Nascopie*. After leaving there we enjoyed an almost ice-free run to Chesterfield, Nottingham Island, Wolstenholme, Lake Harbour, Cape Hope's Advance, Fort Chimo, Port Burwell and Resolution Island.

Numerous icebergs were encountered on the voyage north of Davis Strait, and in Prince Regent Inlet we ran into a considerable amount of new ice. Conditions at Fort Ross were very wintry, indeed, with ice forming along the shoreline, and, what was still more unusual, forming along the water line of the ship.

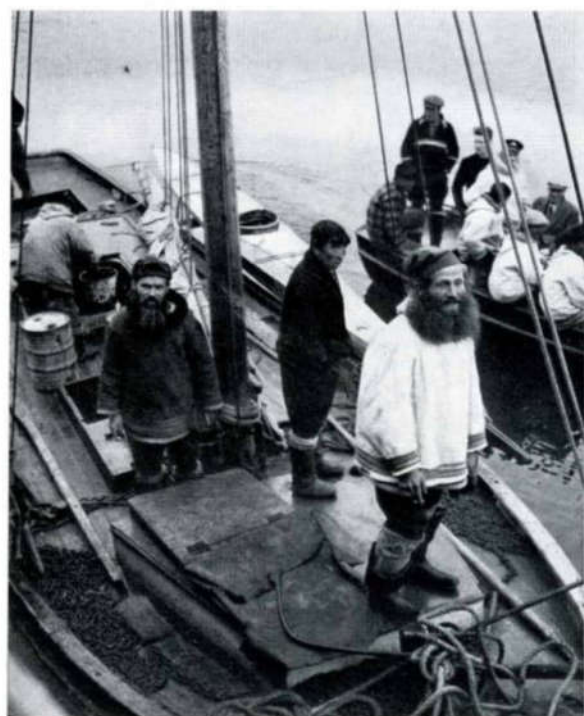
The voyage down Admiralty Inlet to Arctic Bay was very forbidding, inasmuch as the inlet was frozen right across, and the good ship was cutting a lane through quite heavy new ice. In fact, an Arctic blizzard, coupled with a relatively sharp drop in temper-



Keystone of the voyage. The "Nascopie" in the ice.



Above: What! J. W. in the dog-house? No, in the entrance to Monty Demment's greenhouse at Cape Dorset, Baffin Island, whence came the radish he is chewing. Below: Beaver in the Arctic. Fathers Steinmann (right) and Rio on board their Peter-head boat at Wolstenholme.





One of the honeymoon couples going north for three years in the Arctic. The Chesley Russells bound for Southampton Island.



Above: Dressed for the visit of the Canadian National Railways excursioners at Churchill. On the left are the wheat chutes of the 2,500,000-bushel grain elevator.

Below: The new Company truck at Churchill, loaded with caribou skins from Baker Lake, destined for Baffin Island, where caribou are scarce. Post Manager R. B. Urquhart, standing. Herb Figgures from Cape Dorset on top.



ature, might have made it difficult, if not impossible for us to get out of the inlet. Thus, while we had the previous winter's ice in Hudson Strait and Bay, we had next winter's ice in the far north. While we were encountering such frigid conditions in the far north, the Hudson's Bay schooner *Fort Severn* was ice-bound while attempting to reach Igloolik, and the R.C.M.P. schooner *St. Roch* was already frozen in for the winter on the southwest portion of Boothia Peninsula, while the Roman Catholic mission ship *Lady of Lourdes* was frozen in for the winter in the Western Arctic.

However, we had a veteran ship and a veteran commander in the person of Captain T. F. Smellie, so that we successfully cleared both Prince Regent and Admiralty Inlets, the two dangerous ice "bottlenecks" of the far north. Once back in Lancaster Sound, on the way home, we were relatively free from the danger of being ice-bound.

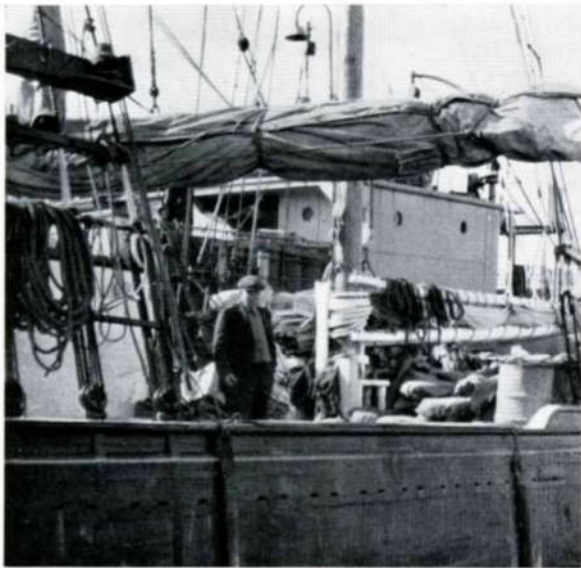
Nevertheless, our arrival at Pond's Inlet was very impressive. We were steaming through a heavy snow storm, when all of a sudden the storm lifted, and there, a mile or two distant, was Pond's Inlet post, covered with a heavy mantle of snow. Clyde also presented quite a wintry appearance, but the weather had modified somewhat by the time we came south to Pangnirtung.

Once clear of the ice, we had a good deal of heavy weather both from Pangnirtung to Ivigtut and Ivigtut to Hebron, and coming down the Labrador coast we had quite a gale of wind, speeding us on our way. The call at Ivigtut was for the purpose of carrying a load of cryolite for Canada's war-time industries. On the return from Ivigtut to Hebron, passengers had the unusual experience of witnessing a large school of killer whales playing about the ship for half an hour.

In all, we made twenty-six calls during the voyage, and notwithstanding the delays caused by ice on the first part of the voyage, favourable conditions enabled us to make up for lost time and to complete the voyage on schedule time, so that we docked at our destination in Eastern Canada on October 12.

A new feature of the voyage was the servicing of the Government radio stations at Resolution Island and Nottingham Island. A new post office was established at Fort Chimo, and for this purpose the *Nascopie* anchored in the mouth of the Koksoak River. Major McKeand, of the Eastern Arctic Patrol, Inspector Martin, R.C.M.P., Doctor Melling and Post Office Representative F. R. E. Sparks travelled up river by motorboat to Fort Chimo while the *Nascopie* went ahead to Port Burwell to take on bunkers. The new post office was able to give top-speed service, for when the Government party arrived by motorboat early in the morning, they found a Royal Canadian Air Force plane visiting Fort Chimo and soon to leave for the south. The post office officially opened at eight in the morning, and the airplane, with the outgoing mail, including first day covers, left a short hour later. After completing their business at Fort Chimo, the Government party returned by motorboat to Port Burwell, and there joined the *Nascopie* to complete the voyage.

In addition to the Government party, R.C.M.P., missionaries and Hudson's Bay staff passengers, we had the personnel of the Government radio stations and also ten United States passengers who were making the Eastern Arctic voyage for the first time. All in all, it was an exceptional voyage, old ice in the south, new ice in the north, and heavy weather homeward bound.



Captain Barbour on board his schooner, "Fort Severn," which lies alongside "Nascopie." Later in the season, on her way to Igloolik, the "Severn" became stuck in the ice of Frozen Strait, and had to turn back. Post Manager Stanners of Igloolik therefore had to forego his furlough for another year.



\$12,000 worth of Victory Bonds were sold to the men of the Eastern Arctic on this trip by Major McKeand (left). With him are J. H. A. Wilmot, purser, and Chief Officer Waters. (That's a sweater—not a shirt.)



Above: Coming aboard at Lake Harbour, Baffin Island. "Jock" Kilgour the new post manager and his bride, formerly Mary Lowe of H. B. House, Winnipeg, with Rev. and Mrs. Quartermain and J. Bell, retiring post manager. Below: John G. Cormack stands bareheaded on the beach at Clyde, northern Baffin Island. "Nascopie" in the distance.



Above: Old Moravian Mission at Port Burwell. The coal shed where the "Nascopie" bunkered is beyond.

Below: Laughter in Lancaster Sound. Left to right: Cst. McLaughlin, R.C.M.P., from Lake Harbour; Mrs. Patton, M. L. Manning from Sugluk; Miss Reeves, for Pangnirtung; R. F. Patton, Highland Park, Illinois; George Guy, from Government Radio Station, Nottingham Island.



First Prize Winner in the Competition

My Most Exciting Experience in the Company's Service

by J. W. Nichols
Fort Fitzgerald

HERE is a tale of courage and bitter hardship near the top of the world. In the depth of winter, seventeen years ago, Post Manager J. W. Nichols with two Eskimos set out from Pond's Inlet, northern Baffin Island, to visit Arctic Bay. Most of the journey was made in darkness. Starting with twenty dogs, they returned two months later with only one. The rest had starved to death and the men had eaten eight of them to keep themselves alive. This is Nichols' account of the trip, as recorded day by day in his journal.

Monday, November 17th, 1924. Akoomalik, Mukkee, and myself left Ponds Inlet post to visit our hunters at Arctic Bay. Weather all that could be desired, but cold. We left the post at 8 a.m. and travelled until 6.30 p.m., the last four hours in total darkness. We made a good day's run and camped about 35 miles from the post, and owing to the snow being full of sand we were compelled to eat and drink sand for our supper.

Tuesday, the 18th, was again fine and cold. We made another good run and reached the first encampment of Eskimo, which is at Shatook. Today we passed Corp. McInnis of the R.C.M.P. At this encampment there has not been a fox caught to date and judging by reports there are not likely to be any caught.

Wednesday, 19th. Splendid day, sharp and cold. Travelled from 7.30 a.m. to 11 p.m. and stopped for the night at another encampment of Eskimo. We trav-

elled about 70 miles today. The same report here as at last encampment—no foxes and Eskimo very hungry. We will hold up a day here to hunt seals for dogfood.

Thursday, 20th. Again fine, spent the day hunting and secured three seals, will make an early start tomorrow morning.

Friday, 21st. Weather fine, made a splendid day's run and camped about 55 miles from our last snowhouse, we saw a few bear tracks today but they were all old, not a sign of fox to be seen.

From Saturday, 22nd, to Saturday, 29th, we were completely snow and storm bound and could not leave our snowhouse for the whole of the eight days. It blew a hurricane as well as snow and drift and we could do absolutely nothing. We are now getting only three hours of daylight and the greater part of our travelling will have to be done by moonlight or in the darkness.

Sunday, 30th. The weather is somewhat improved. We were able to get away from our eight days of misery and we can get in our sleeping robes tonight with the satisfaction of knowing that we have shortened the trip another 30 miles or so. About 3 p.m. we ran into very rough ice and, by the look of things, it seems that we are in for a time of very rough travelling. Broke the runner of my kometic going through heavy ice this evening. We hope to have it repaired again before morning.

Monday, December 1st. Weather fine, a little wind and intensely cold. Travelled through very rough ice and made only about four or five miles. The last four hours of travelling was done in total darkness and a man had to be walking ahead of the dogs continually. Even then we had more than we could do to get through the rough ice in places.

Tuesday, 2nd. We were awakened early in the morning by a rush of wind and driving snow in our faces. During the night a gale had sprung up and blown away half of our snowhouse, and we awakened to find ourselves completely buried in snow. However as our grub is now getting short we cannot run the risk of losing any time, and in spite of bad weather we have to keep going. We travelled for twelve hours today through very heavy ice and facing a gale of wind and drift, made camp by lantern light, all hands completely done up and praying to get clear of this rough ice.

Wednesday, 3rd. Exceptionally cold but fine and clear. Spent another heartbreaking day travelling through rough ice. In places it was absolutely impassable and we were compelled to back-track for many miles—or so it seemed to us—and to make things a

The author, sitting on a polar bear he shot near Admiralty Inlet.



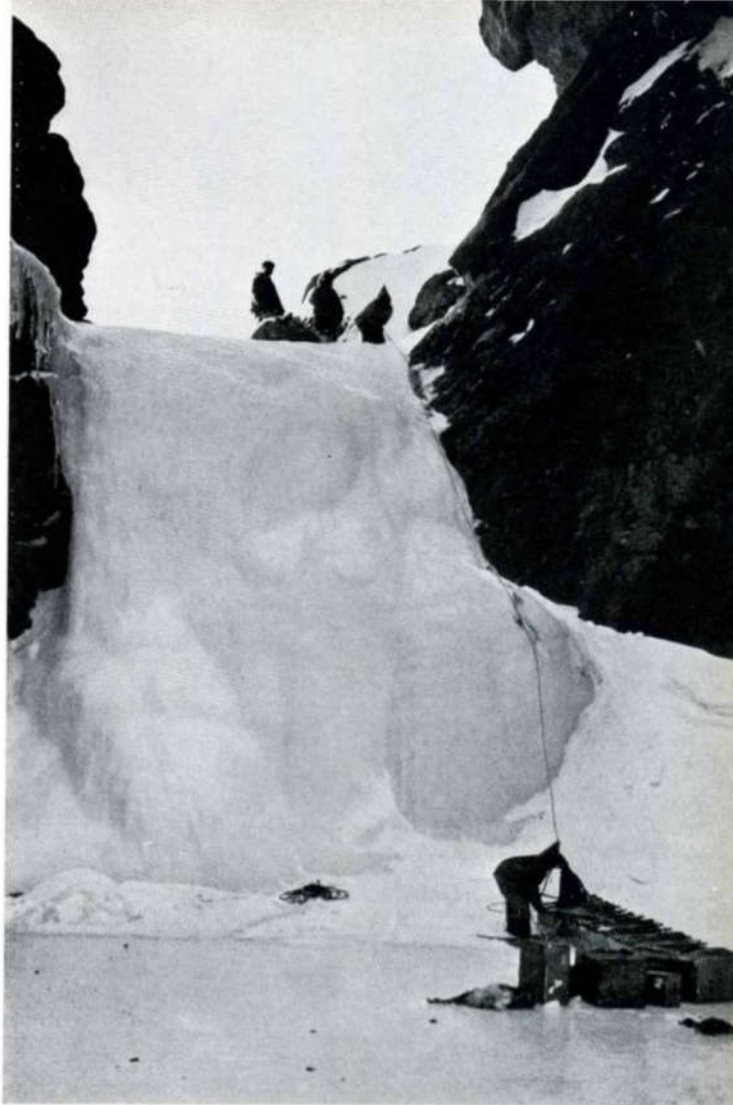
little harder for us the snow is now very soft and deep. I am sorely tempted to turn back and return to the post, but as we are likely to arrive at Arctic Bay and the Eskimo tomorrow afternoon it is better to continue on our way as we have only another day's grub and we have to reach the Eskimo before that is done.

Thursday, 4th. Stormy, wind a gale and drifting, but none of us are caring much as we are hoping to reach Arctic Bay this afternoon. We are now having a cup of hot tea with the thermometer ranging anywhere between forty and sixty degrees below zero, and it is also getting dark, yet it is only 1.15 p.m. by my watch and it is too cold to write more now. However I think I can keep my fingers from freezing while I write a little more. All forenoon ice very rough and we made very slow time, but now it seems to be getting smoother and we are in high hopes of getting into good going before long. *At Arctic Bay.* Having travelled altogether today sixteen hours, we have at last reached our objective but evidently not our destination. We are now camped in one of the Eskimo shacks at Arctic Bay and we are sadly disappointed as well as troubled to find that there are no Eskimo here. We have just eaten the last of our grub and where tomorrow's grub is coming from I cannot say. However from now on until we reach the post again it will be a fight for life and each day as it comes will have to take care of itself. Should the worst come however we still have a small piece of walrus meat which we were keeping for our dogs, and after that is gone, should seals fail us, we have our twenty dogs, but we are hoping to reach the Eskimo before then.

Friday, 5th, to Sunday, 7th. Weather fine and clear and cold. Spent the last three days hunting seals, with no success. Very hungry today, absolutely nothing to eat; will leave here tomorrow as things are beginning to look black, and unless we can secure a seal or two we will have to kill one of our dogs for food.

Monday, 8th. Travelling and hunting, but again without success, and no sign of Eskimo. Dogs as well as ourselves beginning to give out.

Tuesday, 9th. Left our snowhouse in a gale of wind this forenoon, not caring much whether we ever got into one again. Spent the greater part of the day waiting at seal holes and were at last rewarded. Secured two seals and returned to our snowhouse, where we spent the night trying to fill our stomachs, which took the best part of a seal. We shall continue looking for the Eskimo today, as it is now morning. Should we fail to reach them before our seal meat is gone, I am



Lowering komatiks and loads to the bottom of a frozen waterfall.

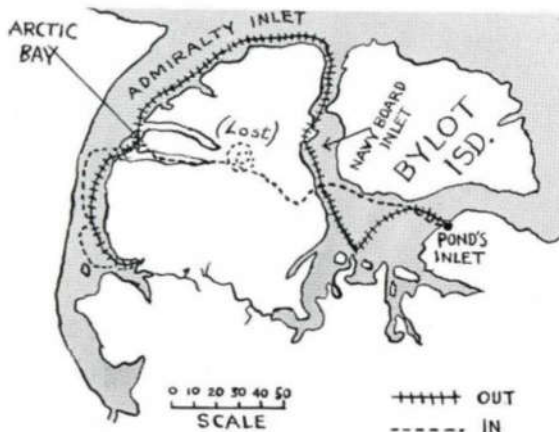
afraid we shall have to try and secure enough seals to allow us to return to the post overland. It is not at all a pleasant contemplation; what with being too weak to walk, from starvation, the thermometer ranging from 50 to 75 degrees of frost and travelling and hunting in either moonlight or total darkness I think things are as bad as they can be.

Wednesday, 10th, and Thursday, 11th, were spent hunting and today we secured another two seals. We also shifted camp, but there is yet no sign of the Eskimo.

Friday, 12th. Hunting, but as it became very stormy we were compelled to give it up without getting anything. On our way back to camp our dogs scented something on the wind, so we let them have their heads and they carried us to the shore, where we found a dead narwhal frozen in the ice. If we are able to get this out it should last our dogs for about three days. Our first dog starved last night.

Saturday, 13th. Got out the greater part of the whale which we found yesterday and gave our dogs a good feed. Weather permitting, we will start to cross the land tomorrow.

Sunday, 14th. Weather fine but bitter cold. After a breakfast of seal meat and tea without sweetening we started travelling up a river to try and get on top the high land. We made a good day's run and camped





Akomalik, the chief guide.

about ten miles from the coast. Our dogs are in very poor condition and two of them died today.

Monday, 15th. Once again we are disappointed. We are compelled to return to the coast, as we are unable to get on top the land from here owing to the perpendicular cliffs.

Tuesday, 16th. Returned to our old snowhouse and will have to remain here to hunt seals enough to allow us to make another attempt to get on top the land. I am at last beginning to feel the strain and am now almost too weak to care much what happens. The Eskimo can manage to live and fatten on raw seal meat, but I can do neither. However, if we have energy enough we shall start hunting tomorrow.

From Wednesday, 17th, to Sunday, 28th, we were continually hunting and secured only four seals. We had a hurricane of wind and snowdrift, which of course made things very pleasant. As soon as the weather clears we will return to Oolookshak (Arctic Bay); from there we will again attempt to cross the land. From this point the land seems to be very narrow and with luck we should cross to Navyboard Inlet in about three days. That is, should our dogs hold out for that long. We now have about enough seal meat to last us for four days, and we have six day's travelling on ice before we take the land and we are hoping to get another seal or two before then.

Monday, 29th. Fine, clear and cold. Travelled only a short distance today owing to hunting. We were lucky enough to secure another seal today, which revives our hopes somewhat. However if we cannot do better we are again likely to run short. Another dog starved today, this makes the seventh that we have lost. I wonder what the end will be.

Tuesday, 30th, and Wednesday, 31st. Hunting and travelling again secured one seal. We should reach Arctic Bay tomorrow and from there we will again take to the land.

Thursday, January 1st, 1925. Splendid day but exceptionally cold. Arrived at Arctic Bay this evening travelling six and one half hours in total darkness; had to keep walking the whole of the day to keep from freezing. We have just finished our New Year's dinner, which consisted of a piece of frozen seal meat and snow water. We are saving our oil until we get on top the land, where we know it will be very much colder than

it is here. While I am writing this I cannot keep my thoughts from wandering to civilization and the sumptuous dinners that most everybody is enjoying today, and if I could suffer much more than I have up to now these thoughts would be more than I could stand. However all things come to an end, one way or another.

Friday, 2nd, and Saturday, 3rd. Held up, weather too stormy to travel in, tomorrow fine or otherwise we will have to make a start from here or starve like our dogs, which is not at all to my liking. I prefer to starve if I have to while making some kind of a fight to reach the post again.

Sunday, 4th. Wind a gale, snowing and drifting. In face of the storm, however, we made a good day's run and we are now camping on the land from where we are to try and get across to Navyboard Inlet. One wonders what will be the result should we get lost. We have part of a seal and our dogs, and when that is finished, God knows what we are to live on, if we are to live at all.

Monday, 5th. At last a fine day but intensely cold, and if it wasn't for the extra hard work getting over the hills I am sure we would have frozen. So I suppose we have something to be thankful for. We managed to make about five miles today and by the look of the land we should get on top tomorrow. Two more of our dogs starved today and one of the Eskimo crippled. The kometic turned over and caught his foot underneath.

Tuesday, 6th. Overcast and snowing but not as cold as yesterday. Travelled for fourteen hours, mostly by

Tough going through rocky terrain.



THE BEAVER, December 1941

moonlight. We are now on the highest part of the land and from here it looks as if we should reach Navyboard Inlet in about two days, but we have eaten the last of our seal meat and the outlook is not at all pleasant.

Wednesday, 7th. Again snowing and thick, unable to make out where to go, but we had to go somewhere, and we did. We started from our snowhouse at 4 a.m. on an empty stomach and travelled until somewhere about midnight; all hands absolutely played out and we are now turning in with nothing but our thoughts for tea, and they are not at all satisfying. To make things worse we are now completely lost. With the darkness and the thick snow falling we are unable to make out in which direction we should travel, but travel we must until we can go no farther, and at the rate we are going that won't take long.

Thursday, 8th. Again stormy, but we were compelled to travel. Hunger is not conducive to rest. We spent twelve hours looking for our last snowhouse, and after travelling in a complete circle the dogs at last found it, and from here I think we can find our way across should we get fine weather. In a lifetime I suppose one eats many unpalatable things, but I have now arrived at a time when I have raw starved dog to face. However in our circumstances we cannot pick and choose our food, so here goes—

I have finished it, thank God, and I think that the least said about it the better. It is enough to know that we have to exist on it until we reach the Eskimo at Navyboard Inlet or until all the dogs are gone.

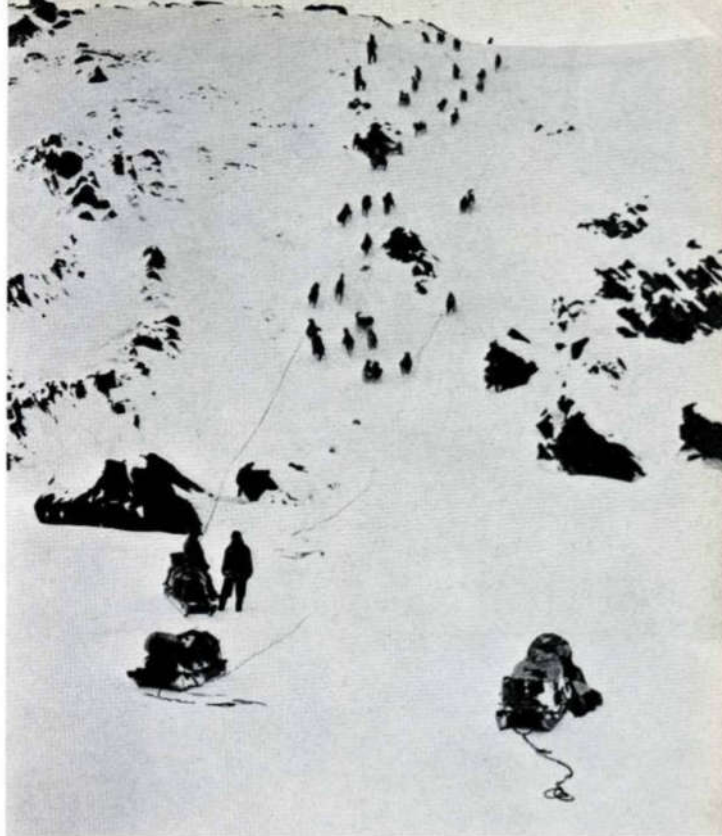
Friday, 9th. Weather dull and thick, but calm. Travelled in a westerly course and returned to our track of the 6th, making a three-days circle. I suppose things cannot become much worse. We have almost reached the limit of what we can stand. We are now too weak to walk and keep up with the dogs, and the dogs are too weak to haul us on the kometic. So we have to keep a line from the kometic tied around our waists. We are managing somehow in this way.

Saturday, 10th. Weather at last fine, started on a new course today, and after travelling about four hours we ran into a river which in my opinion will lead us to the coast in Navyboard. However, whether it does or not we will follow it to its end. We have left only twelve dogs out of twenty-two, and two of these died today. It is a case of them starving or being killed so what difference does it make?

Sunday, 11th. Another day of misery past and I am too tired to write anything about it. It is enough to have to suffer it without writing about it afterward.

Monday, 12th. Stormy. This I think has been our hardest day; every tack of clothes on our bodies is frozen hard and it is only by the utmost will power that we can keep moving at all. In fact the Eskimo froze a little but somehow I have escaped so far. Two more dogs died today and we had to leave them as the other dogs are too far gone to haul them. Up to now we have been using our kometic to boil the dog meat and we have now only enough left to cook for tomorrow morning. God knows what will happen after that. The river that we are now travelling on seems to be widening very rapidly and we are now camped in a place where it is about five hundred yards wide, good indications that we are drawing near the coast.

Tuesday, 13th. Fine but bitterly cold. At 3 a.m. both Eskimo left our snowhouse and walked away. Where they are gone I do not know and furthermore I do not care. At 6.30 p.m. I went outside and used the last of our kometic to cook some dogmeat. After eating



After coming down this hill, on January 9, the men found they had been travelling for three days in a circle.

it I turned in again to await whatever was in store for me. I have decided to give the men until tomorrow to return, and should they not get here then I shall attempt to walk to the coast alone, but I am afraid as things are I will get not far. Have taken my lead dog Natchie into the snowhouse to help keep me warm.

Wednesday, 14th. Early this morning Toonga and Inewa, two Eskimo, arrived from Navyboard with a fresh team and provisions. Both of my men who left here yesterday arrived at their camp safely late last night. The relief is almost worse than the suspense. However they did not take long getting some food hot and I immediately ate so much that I am now suffering worse than ever. We did not feel like spending another day and night in this snowhouse so we started for the Eskimo camp, where we arrived at 11.30 p.m. Whether from the relief or over eating or from the effects of the trip I am unable to say, but I am now too weak to travel, so I have sent a team into the post for some provisions and I will lay up here for a day or two.

Thursday, 15th. Resting and feeling much better, will make a start for the post tomorrow weather permitting.

Friday, 16th. Made a break for the post this forenoon but did not get far owing to a storm which compelled us to camp.

Saturday, 17th. Splendid day; arrived at the post 3.45 p.m. At present I feel as if I could sleep for a month and it is my firm intention to see how close to that I can go; by then I should be feeling fit for another go at Arctic Bay.

"Another go" was had in March, when the accompanying photographs were taken. Natchie the lead dog, half husky and half Newfoundland, and the only survivor of the first trip, again led Nichols' team, and this time the trip was a success. The following year a post was built at Arctic Bay to take care of the trade of that region.



Lindsay Milne of the H B C, aged 2½.

J. W. Norcross

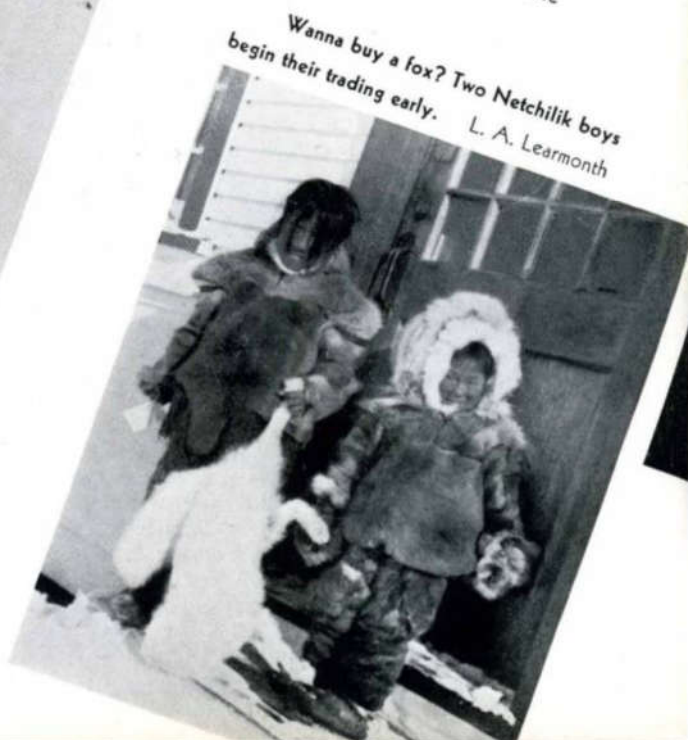


Baby Bunting—Indian version. The coat is woven of rabbit skin strips. S. R. Crone



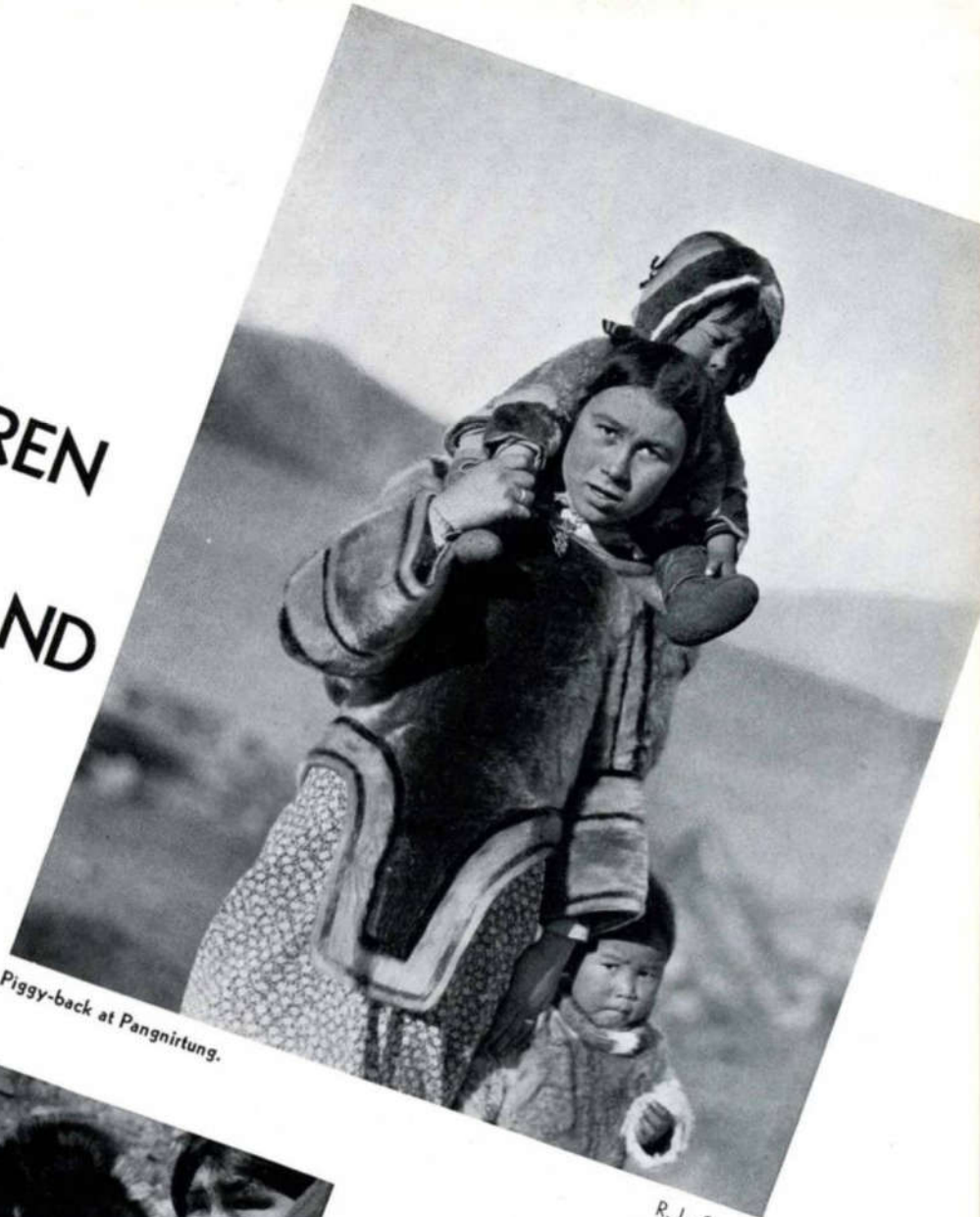
Bear trap with boy, Mistassinnny.

S. R. Crone



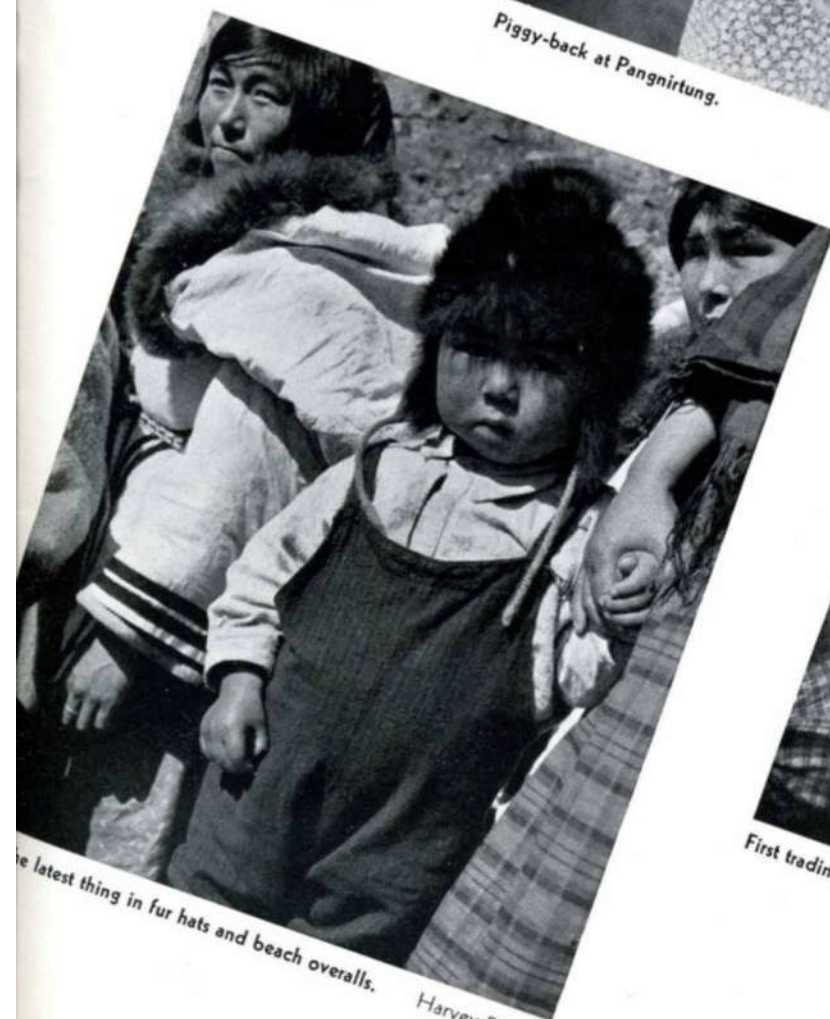
Wanna buy a fox? Two Netchilik boys begin their trading early. L. A. Learmonth

CHILDREN of the NORTHLAND



Piggy-back at Pangnirtung.

R. L. Sutton



the latest thing in fur hats and beach overalls.

Harvey Bassett



First trading lesson at Tuktuk store.

A. Figgures



Chief Trader Barnston, from the painting by Charles Comfort for the Hudson's Bay Company.

George Barnston

by George A. Dunlop and C. P. Wilson

Habana, Cuba

Winnipeg

THE central figure in the cover picture is that of Chief Trader George Barnston, who was in charge of the King's Posts at that time (1846), with headquarters at Tadoussac.

Barnston, born in Edinburgh about 1798 of Northumberland stock, had been educated as a surveyor and army engineer, and intended by his family for work in the "East Indies." But he displeased his relations by going to Canada instead. He entered the service of the North-West Company in 1820, at the age of about twenty-two, and after the coalition the following year he was retained in the new Hudson's Bay Company as an apprentice clerk. Stationed first in the York Factory district, he then moved west, and spent the trading season of 1825-6 partly at Fort Garry and partly at Bas de la Rivière at the mouth of the Winnipeg River.

In 1826 he was sent out to the Pacific Coast, and the following year he assisted Chief Factor James MacMillan in the establishment of Fort Langley. His knowledge of surveying and engineering must have been of considerable help in laying out the fort, which had to be well built and strongly fortified to discourage any attack by the fierce Indians of that district. As George Simpson said, writing from there to the Governor and Committee on March 1st, 1829:

"The great population of this part of the country, and the hostile character they bore, rendered it necessary to send a larger force among them, than the Trade in the first instance could be expected to afford, as we are only respected by those treacherous Savages, in proportion to our strength & means of defence. Chief Factor McMillan with 2 clerks and 21 men, accordingly took their ground here, and have maintained it firmly in defiance of the threats of upwards of 5000 Indians who during the Summer assemble in the neighbourhood of the Establishment for the purpose of Fishing."

For Outfit 1830-1, Barnston took charge of Fort Nez Percés (Walla Walla) on the Columbia, where he succeeded Samuel Black. It was probably while he was there that the fight occurred which Ballantyne describes at length in his book *Hudson's Bay*.

Barnston had bought a fine horse from a Blackfoot Indian, which shortly afterwards was stolen from the fort. The following spring the Indian returned, and had the barefaced impudence to try and sell him the same horse. Barnston, "an exceedingly quiet, good natured man," as Ballantyne says, "but very passionate when roused, no sooner witnessed the fellow's audacity, that he seized a gun and shot the horse."

The Blackfoot at once sprang upon him, but having been deprived of his weapons at the gate, he was no match for the powerful white man, and Barnston proceeded to pommel him out of the fort and all the way to the Indian camp. There he was set upon by a dozen warriors, who threw him to the ground and began to beat him up.

One savage came forward with a large stone and dashed it into his face, knocking him unconscious. At that moment, armed men from the fort came running up, just in time to rescue him from a gory death. To his dying day, Barnston carried across the bridge of his nose a deep scar, where the stone had struck him.

After a year at Fort Nez Percés, Barnston resigned from the Company and went east to Lachine with Chief Factor William Connolly. His resignation seems to have irked Governor Simpson, and although next year he rejoined the Company, a certain amount of ill feeling remained between the two men. Simpson sent him to establish Fort Concord on the headwaters of the Winisk River, but all was not well. In December 1833, J. G. McTavish, at Moose Factory, wrote to his friend James Hargrave:

"Our poor friend Barnston is in the Winisk Country since last summer and I have not as yet heard how he was coming on—Oh what a pity such a fine young fellow as that should be under a cloud—It is most remarkable that upon any subject you choose except the one, he is the same clever steady minded man that ever he was—I endeavoured to reason with him but it was of no avail. . . . Poor fellow I wish to God I could befriend him, of course I will do what I can, but I am afraid unless he contrives to forget & forgive his case in this Country may be a hopeless one—I may be mistaken however for I assure you Mr. Simpson is fully aware of his abilities and has the wish to conciliate matters, without compromising himself."

This is supported by Simpson's own opinion of Barnston as recorded in his private *Book of Servants' Characters*, written the previous year and noted for its scathing criticism: "A well Educated man very active, & high spirited to a romantic degree, who will on no account do what he considers an improper thing." But at the same time the governor found him "touchy and sensitive" and "sometimes of a gloomy disponding turn of mind."

The year after building Fort Concord on Lake Wapikopa, Barnston was sent to take charge of Martin Fall post on the Albany, where he remained for six years. While he was there, James Douglas at Fort Vancouver wrote to James Hargrave at York Factory in 1839: "I am glad to hear of a break in the clouds that for some years have obscured our friend Barnston's prospects, through which the sun begins to peer upon him." And sure enough, the following year he was appointed to the rank of chief trader and given charge of Albany Factory.

He was soon, however, slated for a post on the Lower St. Lawrence. William Connolly was in charge of the King's Posts and the Seignior of Mingan (see



Fort Nez Percés, or Walla Walla, the scene of Barnston's fight with the Blackfeet

Archives of B.C.

The Beaver, June 1935), a charge which he quitted in 1840 to go on furlough for two years. Barnston was to succeed him, but in January 1843, Murdock McPherson wrote from Tadoussac:

"Mr. Barnston has not yet come to fill his intended place at Mingan, Mr. Connelly having preferred retirement to going to relieve him of his charge on the coast of H. Bay."

Barnston himself was granted a year's furlough at that time, and on his return from England took charge of the King's Posts.

It was in January 1846 that he started out from Lachine with young Ballantyne, then an apprentice clerk twenty years old. (See the article on R. M. Ballantyne in this issue.) Ballantyne describes their journey in some detail in *Hudson's Bay*, but in keeping with his practice of changing names slightly, he calls Barnston "Mr. Stone." They travelled through Montreal and Quebec, and arrived on the south side of the Saguenay, where the picture shows them, on February 7.

Tadoussac was not a very exciting place to live. In fact one of the Company clerks had gone mad—possibly from ennui—and at the time of Ballantyne's sojourn there was in the asylum at Quebec. "The only thing that I can recollect as being at all interesting or amusing," wrote Ballantyne, "—except, of course, the society of my scientific and agreeable friend, Mr. Stone, and his amiable family—was a huge barrel organ, which, like the one that I had found at Oxford House, played a rich variety of psalm tunes, and a choice selection of Scotch reels."

The following year, Barnston was promoted to the rank of chief factor. He continued to make his headquarters for the King's Domain at Tadoussac until 1849, when he moved down the St. Lawrence to Ile Jérémie, not far from the present post of Bersimis. But he remained there only a year, and then went on furlough.

On his return to Canada in 1851, he took charge of the important entrepot of Norway House, where he remained until 1858. The next year he was appointed to Michipicoten on the north shore of Lake Superior, and there he stayed until 1862, when he finally retired from the service with a year's furlough.

For the remaining twenty years of his life he lived in Montreal, where he devoted himself to an intensive study of his hobby, natural history. While he had been in the service, the Smithsonian Institution at Washington had requested the Hudson's Bay Company to instruct its officers and clerks throughout its terri-

tories to study the natural history of their respective districts. The Smithsonian supplied collecting materials and printed instructions to help them in observing animals, birds, fishes, and insects, as well as in making records and curing specimens.

Some of the Company officers (like Chief Factors Bernard Rogan Ross and Roderick MacFarlane) became greatly interested in this work, and Chief Factor Barnston was one of these. In gathering specimens and information he was enthusiastic and untiring, and he was a regular contributor to *The Ibis*. The Smithsonian still has specimens sent in by him, although some of his collections were burned in a fire there, and others distributed to other museums in various parts of the world. The British Museum and the Redpath Museum at McGill University also bear witness to his zeal as a collector.

With his son, Dr. James Barnston, he became a charter member of the Montreal Natural History Society, and later became its president. His specialties were the mosses of the Canadian North and its molluscs. At the same time he carried on a world-wide correspondence with museums and fellow naturalists. Dr. James Barnston inherited his interest in natural history, and became professor of botany at McGill.

He died in Montreal in 1882, twenty years after he left the service of the Company. Altogether he had eleven children—six sons and five daughters. One of the daughters, Janet, was married in 1863 to James Vetch Dunlop, himself a Company man from 1856-66, and father of one of the co-authors of this article. The last surviving son, G. Duncan, died in Montreal in 1939 at the age of eighty-four.

This portrait of George Barnston was made in Montreal after his retirement from the Company.





Christmas in the Fur Trade

Fur traders arriving at Moose Factory for Christmas.

Harvey Bassett

CHRISTMASTIME down the years has been celebrated by the men of the Hudson's Bay Company in many far, strange corners of the continent. It has found some ensconced in the cheery atmosphere of a comfortable fort, some at a lonely outpost in the wilderness, some still travelling on the snowy trail. But few have failed to mark the joyous season in one way or another. To the Scotsman, and the French-Canadian of course, Christmas Day was not as important as New Years. Fort Chipewyan, for example, in 1823 ignored the former but celebrated the latter.

One of these festive occasions was curious, in that the merrymakers drank the health of a queen nearly five months dead. Michael Grimington, in the journal of Albany Factory, James Bay, wrote on Christmas Day 1714: "Wee keep Christmast Day wth. Drinking the Queens Health and the Compies." Anne had certainly been on the throne when the Company's ship sailed from London in the spring, bearing Captain James Knight with her royal commission to take over the Bay forts from the French. But she had died on August 1st, and George I reigned in her stead.

Ten years later, at the same post, R. Staunton wrote in his journal: "This beinge Christmas daye the People observed the same as usual in this remote part of the worlde, but not with the pleasure and sattisfactione as if the Companyes ship and cargoe had gone safe home, weh. makes as all feare the worse, not only at this time

but all the yeare." He was referring to the ship *Mary*, which had been sunk after leaving Albany that fall, with all her rich cargo of furs.

At Moose Factory, the form of celebration varied with the religious scruples of the master. James Duffield, who seems to have been a jolly soul, wrote on Christmas Day 1741: "At noon gave each Mess a bottle of Wine & in the evening a gallon pot of Strong beer to Celebrate the happy time—At 8 saw them all to bed, not forgetting the Conflagration 6 years past." (This refers to the fire on December 26, 1735, when the fort was destroyed by a fire that started in the "cook room.") In 1747, however, Christmas at Moose Factory could hardly have been described as merry. "Spent the Day in Religious Exercise," wrote dour John Potts, "and to prevent hard Drinking I did Read over to them one of the Little Books Your Honrs. was pleased to Send us Last Year; weh. is a Disswasive from the Sin of Drunkenness, I gave them a Little Liquor. in the Evening and at Eight O Clock Ordered all hands to bed and the Lights out."

Jollity was the order of the day at Albany in 1749: "Having three Fiddlers in the Factory," wrote the master, "viz Geo. Millar, Willm. Murray & James Short, our People celebrated the Evening with Dancing & Singing, and were all very merry: kept a carefull Look out in case of Fire."

Anthony Henday, on his way home from the Black-foot Country in 1754, ignored Christmas completely—

at least in his journal. On December 25 his only entry was: "Killed 2 Beaver. We have a frost in the night & partly gone in the day." And on New Year's Day, 1755: "Freezing Weather: Indians killed one Beaver & 2 Waskesew [deer]. I wear a Buffalo skin pair of shoes with the hair inwards."

At Eastmain in 1764 the fun began on the day before Christmas. "Broach'd a Cask of Strong Beer," reads the journal for December 24, "drank your Honrs. Health & a merry Christmas to all Friends in the Bay." But no drinking was indulged in on Christmas Day: "Spent the Day wth. sobriety making meery wth. Innocent Diversions."

Pathetic by comparison is Thomas Stagner's entry in the journal for 1789 of Manchester House, on the North Saskatchewan. "This being Christmas Morning, our small Stock of Flour, afforded us, a Cake to eat, with a little Tea & Chocolate, (which we all apparently enjoyed very much) no one can know what it is to want Bread, but those who experience it, (which we here, daily do, in this Wild Country; particular Holidays only excepted.)"

New Year's Day 1797, at Brandon House, on the prairies, was a very festive occasion, marked by fraternization with the Company's rivals. James Sutherland recorded that: "In the morning the Canadians [Nor'-westers] make the House and yard Ring with salluting, the House then filld with them when they all got a dram each, after they were gone the House filld a second time with Ladys the wives of the Canadians with the Complimentary Kiss of the new year according to their Custom and drest in their wedding garments, and had a dram to give each of them also."

At Osnaburgh House two years later there was more fraternization with the Nor'-westers. "I had the honour of my Neighbours company to dinner," wrote John McKay on Christmas Day. And he added with a touch of dry Scots humour, "Your Honours has the honour of bearing the expences."

Towards the close of the struggle between the two great companies, however, there was no such comrade-

ship evident. George Simpson wrote on Christmas Day from Lake Athabaska, near the North-West Company Fort Chipewyan: "This being Xmas day the people had a dram in the morning and were allowed to make holyday. The Gentlemen sat down to the most sumptuous Dinner that Fort Wedderburn could afford, true English fare, Roast Beef and plum pudding and afterwards a temperate Kettle of Punch. McGillivray paid his Friends at the Watch house a visit for about half an hour; they seem to muster unusually strong and I have directed a guard to be kept to night. The weather bitterly cold."

New Year's Day started off with a bang: "The festivities of the New Year commenced at four O'Clock this morning when the people honoured me with a salute of Fire arms, and in half an hour afterwards the whole Inmates of our Garrison assembled in the hall dressed in their best clothes, and were regaled in a suitable manner with a few flaggon's Rum and some Cakes; a full allowance of Buffaloe meat was served out to them and a pint of Spirits for each man; the women were also entertained to the utmost of our ability. . . . The people have been enjoying themselves with a dance and seem much gratified by the attention paid them."

Two years later, Fort Chipewyan was a Hudson's Bay Company fort, and the entry for January 1st shows that the festivities were very similar to those celebrated under Simpson at nearby Fort Wedderburn. "The men were invited in and treated with three rounds of liquor and cakes, after which a present of a pint of rum each was given them."

The winter of 1831-2 found John Work travelling through what is now Idaho. His entry for December 25 reads: "Stormy, cold weather. Being Christmas Day we did not raise camp. Owing to our not having fallen in with buffalo lately many of the people fared but indifferently having only dry meat, and several of them not much of that."

January 1st was evidently a more important day to the travellers. "This being Sunday," wrote Work,

The festive board at Albany.

Winthrop Brown



"and New Years Day neither our people nor the Indians went in pursuit of buffalo tho' large herds were to be seen far off. The men and some of the principal Indians were treated with a dram and some cakes in the morning, and a small quantity of rum had been brought from the fort for the occasion. One of the Americans who passed Friday returned yesterday."

On that same day, in far off Michipicoten post on the shores of Lake Superior, Chief Factor George Keith recorded in more detail the celebrations at his post: "A little preceding Sun rise the Servants assembled in front of the Mess House and honouring us with the customary *feu de joie* were invited to walk in and were treated with a few Glasses of Liquor (a compound of Brandy &c.) and some flour cakes. This over they retired in excellent humour, carrying a Gallon of Rum/say 1 pint P Com; Labourer 1½ dr P Mechanick &c. to commence their jollification. The Ladies next came made their curtsies and being ushered into the family Room were treated with a Glass of Wine or something more potent (agreeably to individual taste) and afterwards were indulged with a *dejeune a la fourchette*. Thus the day passed agreeably to all appearance and without any fracas or material interruption to the conviviality of the period. It is customary to compliment the Men servants with a little Tobacco—say about ½ lb P head—but this will be distributed more seasonably another day."

But undoubtedly the most detailed descriptions of Christmas celebrations at the posts of the Company were written by the famous author of boys' books, R. M. Ballantyne, and by Paul Kane, the Canadian artist, whose paintings of the Canadian west over eighty years ago are now so highly prized.

Ballantyne spent Christmas 1843 as an apprentice at York Factory, and has left a long account of it in his first book, *Hudson's Bay*. It is far too lengthy to copy here, but the following extracts will suffice to give a fair picture of the celebrations:

"Our Christmas dinner was a good one in a substantial point of view, and a very pleasant one, in a social point of view. We ate it in the winter mess-room, and really (for Hudson's Bay) this was quite a snug and highly decorated apartment. True, there was no carpet on the floor, and the chairs were homemade; but then, the table was mahogany, and the walls were hung round with several large engravings in bird's-eye maple frames. The stove, too, was brightly polished with black lead, and the painting of the room had been executed with a view to striking dumb those innocent individuals who had spent the greater part of their lives at outposts, and were, consequently, accustomed

to domiciles and furniture of the simplest and most unornamental description. On the present grand occasion, the mess-room was illuminated by an argand lamp, and the table covered with a snow-white cloth, whereon reposed a platter, containing a beautiful fat, plump wild-geese, which had a sort of come-eat-me-up quick-else-I'll-melt expression about it that was painfully delicious. Opposite to this smoked a huge roast of beef, to procure which one of our most useless draught oxen had been sacrificed. This, with a dozen of white partridges, and a large piece of salt pork, composed our dinner. But the greatest rarities on the board were two large decanters of port wine, and two smaller ones of Madeira. These flanked by tumblers and glasses; and truly, upon the whole, our dinner made a goodly show. . . .

"At the top of the table sat Mr. Grave, indistinctly visible through the steam that rose from the wild-geese



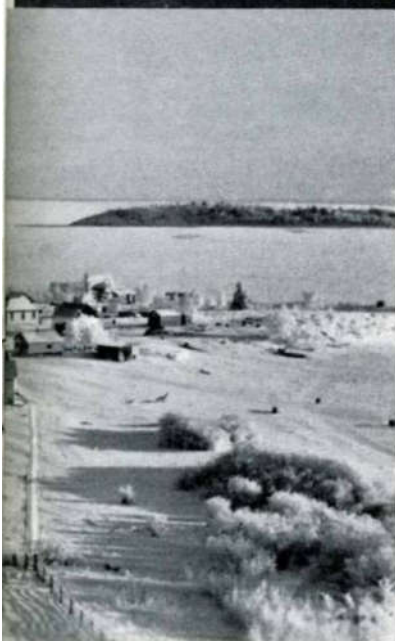
before him. On his right and left sat the doctor and the accountant, and down from them sat the skipper, four clerks, and Mr. Wilson, whose honest face beamed with philanthropic smiles at the foot of the table. . . .

"In the midst of our fun, Mr. Grave proposed a toast. Each filled a bumper, and silence reigned around, while he raised his glass, and said, 'Let us drink to absent friends.' We each whispered, 'Absent friends,' and set our glasses down in silence, while our minds flew back to the scenes of former days. . . . Our sad feelings, however, were speedily put to flight, and our gravity routed, when the skipper proposed 'The Ladies'; which toast we drank with a hearty good-will, although, indeed, the former included them, inasmuch as they also were absent friends—the only one within two hundred and fifty miles of us being Mr. Grave's wife. . . .

"Just as we had reached the above climax, the sound of a fiddle struck upon our ears, and reminded us that our guests who had been invited to the ball were ready; so, emptying our glasses, we left the dining-room, and adjourned to the hall.



Above: Bachelor's Hall at York Factory, where Ballantyne spent Christmas of 1843, is the building on the extreme right. The winter mess room, where they had Christmas dinner, was part of a building which stood on the site of the post manager's residence, seen in centre. A. Harkes



Left: Fort Chipewyan today. Wm. MacFarlane

"Here a scene of the oddest description presented itself. The room was lit up by means of a number of tallow candles, stuck in tin sconces round the walls. On benches and chairs sat the Orkneymen and Canadian half-breeds of the establishment, in their Sunday jackets and capotes; while here and there the dark visage of an Indian peered out from among their white ones. But round the stove—which had been removed to one side to leave space for the dancers—the strangest group was collected. Squatting down on the floor, in every ungraceful attitude imaginable, sat about a dozen Indian women, dressed in printed calico gowns, the chief peculiarity of which was the immense size of the balloon-shaped sleeves, and the extreme scantiness, both in length and width, of the skirts. Colored handkerchiefs covered their heads, and ornamented moccasins decorated their feet; besides which, each one wore a blanket in the form of a shawl, which they put off before standing up to dance. They were chatting and talking to each other with great volubility, occasionally casting a glance behind them, where at least half-a-dozen infants stood bolt upright in their tight-laced cradles. On a chair, in a corner near the

stove, sat a young good-looking Indian, with a fiddle of his own making beside him. This was our Paganini; and beside him sat an Indian boy with a kettle-drum, on which he tapped occasionally, as if anxious that the ball should begin.

"All this flashed upon our eyes; but we had not much time for contemplating it, as, the moment we entered, the women simultaneously rose, and coming modestly forward to Mr. Wilson, who was the senior of the party, saluted him, one after another! I had been told that this was a custom of the ladies on Christmas-day, and was consequently not quite unprepared to go through the ordeal. . . .

"This ceremony over, we each chose partners, the fiddle struck up, and the ball began. Scotch reels were the only dances known by the majority of the guests, so we confined ourselves entirely to them."

Paul Kane's Christmas Day at a Company post was spent at Fort Edmonton, the headquarters of the Saskatchewan District, in 1847. He writes:

"On Christmas-day the flag was hoisted, and all appeared in their best and gaudiest style, to do honour to the holiday. . . . About two o'clock we sat down to dinner. Our party consisted of Mr. Harriett, the chief, and three clerks, Mr. Thebo [Thibault?], the Roman Catholic missionary from Manitou Lake about thirty miles off, Mr. Rundell [Rundle], the Wesleyan missionary, who resided within the pickets, and myself. . . .

"The dining-hall in which we assembled was the largest room in the fort, probably about fifty by twenty-five feet, well warmed by large fires, which are scarcely ever allowed to go out. The walls and ceilings are boarded, as plastering is not used, there being no limestone within reach; but these boards are painted in a style of the most startling barbaric gaudiness, and the ceiling filled with centre-pieces of fantastic gilt scrolls, making altogether a saloon which no white man would enter for the first time without a start, and which the Indians always looked upon with awe and wonder.



Paul Kane's painting of Fort Edmonton.

Royal Ontario Museum

"The room was intended as a reception room for the wild chiefs who visited the fort; and the artist who designed the decorations was no doubt directed to 'astonish the natives.' If such were his instructions, he deserves the highest praise for having faithfully complied with them. . . . No table-cloth shed its snowy whiteness over the board; no silver candelabra or gaudy china interfered with its simple magnificence. The bright tin plates and dishes reflected jolly faces, and burnished gold can give no truer zest to a feast.

"At the head, before Mr. Harriett, was a large dish of boiled buffalo hump; at the foot smoked a boiled buffalo calf. Start not, gentle reader, the calf is very small, and is taken from the cow by the Caesarean operation long before it attains its full growth. This, boiled whole, is one of the most esteemed dishes amongst the epicures of the interior. My pleasing duty was to help a dish of mouffe, or dried moose nose; the gentleman on my left distributed the white fish, delicately browned in buffalo marrow. The priest helped the buffalo tongue, whilst Mr. Rundell cut up the beavers' tails. Nor was the other gentleman left unemployed, as all his spare time was occupied in dissecting a roast wild goose. The centre of the table was

graced with piles of potatoes, turnips, and bread conveniently placed, so that each could help himself without interrupting the labours of his companions. Such was our jolly Christmas dinner at Edmonton; and long will it remain in my memory, although no pies, or puddings, or blanc manges, shed their fragrance over the scene.

"In the evening the hall was prepared for the dance to which Mr. Harriett had invited all the inmates of the fort, and was early filled by the gaily dressed guests. Indians, whose chief ornament consisted in the paint on their faces, voyageurs with bright sashes and neatly ornamented moccasins, half-breeds glittering in every ornament they could lay their hands on; whether civilised or savage, all were laughing, and jabbering in as many different languages as there were styles of dress. English, however, was little used, as none could speak it but those who sat at the dinner-table. The dancing was most picturesque, and almost all joined in it. . . .

"After enjoying ourselves with such boisterous vigour for several hours, we all gladly retired to rest about twelve o'clock, the guests separating in great good humour, not only with themselves but with their entertainers."

Christmastime in the North to-day is a much quieter affair. But it does not pass unobserved, and at some of the older posts certain customs survive. At Moose Factory, for instance, on New Year's Eve, the Company servants fire a *feu de joie* in front of the post manager's house, and when he appears in the lighted doorway, they dance a jig or two in the snow to a fiddler's tune. In the Arctic, where the posts are newly established, the Eskimos are often given a "feast," and sports are staged for their benefit, including a northern version of football on the ice. At night, the wind may howl outside at fifty below, and the drifts pile high against the house; but inside, the post manager with his wife, and a friend or two, raise their glasses over the gleaming silver in the time-honoured way, to toast each other and their "absent friends."

Mr. and Mrs. O. M. Demment's living room at Cape Dorset, Baffin Island, Christmas 1940. (Yes, that's B. P.)



From the Fur Trade Posts

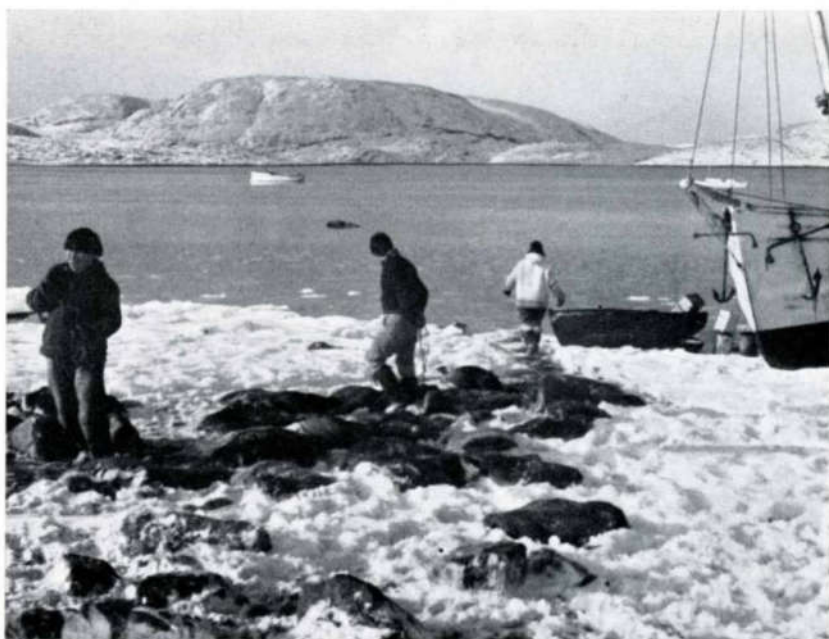


Rapid transit at Cumberland House, Saskatchewan. Note the old palisade.

F. Reid



Tired of the old legend about stacking beaver skins against a gun, Post Manager Ross of Temagami, Ontario, had the bright idea of trying it out. Here one of the local Indians holds a \$60 rifle up against a pile of beaver pelts—and thereby the legend up to ridicule. The price of the pelts? Only about \$3,000 . . .



The result of a successful walrus hunt lies on the beach at Cape Dorset, Baffin Island. No, those aren't whole walrus—just bits.

O. M. Demment

The curiosest things happen at Pukatawagan, in northern Manitoba. Left: A girl trapper, Miss Berna Clarke, about to start out on her trap line. Right: We've heard of the owl and the pussy cat, but here is something new in friendships.

A. B. McIvor



Bompas the Greenhorn

by W. Cornwallis King

as told to Mary Weekes

How Mr. King made a 450-mile dog-sled trip near the Arctic Circle with a "green" traveller who later became famous as Bishop Bompas

IN 1867 I was in charge of Fort Rae. That year I went on a trading and exploratory trip from there to Fort Norman by way of Great Bear Lake. I was anxious to get a record from Nicol Taylor, the post manager, of his accounts with the Dog-Rib hunters, so that I would know how much credit I could safely let them have when they came to Fort Rae to trade. As no one but Indians had ever made that trip, I was the first white man to do so.

I made careful arrangements for the trip and started with four dogsleds, provisions, some trading goods, two Indian guides and my general servant, Louis La Ferte, the renowned interpreter and traveller.

In my own team, I had four strapping dogs. Their mother ran loose. Sometimes I harnessed her, to give the others, in turn, freedom. La Ferte, my man, had five dogs also; the other men the same complement. We never rode on our sleds; we ran ahead, walked beside or followed.

I wore sensible and suitable clothes. We did not go in for spectacular dress. I had a deerskin capote, buckskin coat, blue stroud leggings with little red stripes down the sides (we permitted ourselves this bit of ornamentation, as we carried these leggings in stock), moose-skin moccasins, duffle socks, with a thin pair of worsted socks next my feet, and moose-skin mitts. For sleeping, each man carried a caribou skin robe, a three-point Hudson's Bay blanket, and a canvas sheet

six to eight feet long and a yard wide to spread on the ground. At night we rolled ourselves first in the blanket, then in the robe. We had no shelter of any kind against the weather, except what we could get from placing our sleds on edge to form a snow or wind break.

We struck the lake at a place which my guides called Bear Point, and here we made camp. Nearby was a great cave, my guides said. I asked them to take me to it. They were reluctant. I said I would go.

This great cave, which ran into the hill for fifty or sixty yards, was a cavity left by a rock, the size of a large house, which had slipped away from the main rock into the water. It looked from a distance like a great bear's head. So the lake had been named by the Indians. I went into the cave, and there found bones of birds, fish and animals. I was surprised to find great quantities of arrows to which bits of coloured calico were attached. My guides were nervous. They told me, hesitatingly, that the cave was inhabited by the *Mucha* (bad) Manitou and that Indians never visited it. They appeased the evil Manitou by firing decorated arrows into it as they went past in their canoes. This cave is shown on Franklin's map of his 1825-6 discoveries as "Cave and Isles of the Manito."

From Bear Point my guides took me straight across the lake to the site of old Fort Franklin which was built by Sir John Franklin's party. Only the ruins of the old post stood. I made out the fallen walls of houses

Fort Dease on Cameron Bay, Great Bear Lake. The Company store is on the extreme left.

Eldorado Gold Mines





A dog train approaching Fort Norman, 1921. The second man is Cpl. Doak, R.C.M.P., killed by an Eskimo in 1922. P. H. Godsell

which had been built of stone, and the remains of chimneys about four or five feet high. It seemed strange to see a sun-dial standing near the ruins. Fort Franklin was about fifty miles—a full day's travel on the ice—from Bear Point, and about sixty miles from Fort Norman.

I was three days at the post getting my business arranged, exchanging lists of Indian debts with Taylor and visiting with Mr. Bompas, the missionary. Bompas said, "I am expecting letters, in connection with the diocese, by the spring packet. By writing to Fort Simpson, my answers will be delayed for a year. Let me go with you as far as Fort Rae. From there I can get to Fort Resolution, meet the packet and examine and answer my letters."

"Much as I dislike to," I said, "I shall have to refuse your request. It would be folly for you to come. It has taken experienced men twenty-one days, travelling fast, to walk the four hundred and fifty miles between the posts."

I couldn't discourage him. He kept pleading with me to take him. "God will take care of us," he said.

I raised all kinds of objections. I couldn't put him off. Finally, the next morning, I agreed to let him accompany us. "It is a matter of life and death," I told him, "and you will have to assume the risk of starvation and exposure." I made him sign a written agreement absolving me of responsibility.

We got off at dawn the next morning. It was a fine bright day. The sky was lightened by flashing northern lights. But it was cold! I learned afterwards that the thermometer at Fort Norman that night had registered 70° below, the then lowest known record at this post. It was the only time in the country that I knew the mercury to go as low as that.

Bompas had a little bedding—mighty little—a small bag of provisions and a box of chocolates. His provision bag weighed ten pounds. I had warned him to travel light, as my dogs could not be burdened with extra baggage. He had, altogether, fifty pounds of dunnage. Altogether, my dogs had a load of two hundred and fifty pounds, which was light enough for fast travelling.

My man, La Ferte, carried about two hundred and fifty pounds of general provisions on his sled and some fish for his dogs. Bompas was a passenger against my

will. La Ferte and the Indian guides had objected, as much as they dared, to Bompas coming with us. Before we had got two hundred yards, the cold and intense wind, which was three quarters behind us, sent us at a run over the ice. My guides started at a quick walk, then broke into a dog-trot. Louis La Ferte's dog-team followed the guides. I followed La Ferte. My dogs went at a smart rate, five or six miles an hour. That was nothing for them, or for me.

But what about Mr. Bompas? He was a good walker, but six miles an hour was too much for him. He fell behind. On ahead the guides and La Ferte were moving fast. I followed them, losing a little. Presently I began losing sight of Bompas. Even if I called, my men were now too far ahead to hear. I could not leave my minister in order to overtake them. He might get lost or frozen. I realized suddenly what I was up against. What I had feared was happening. The man *couldn't* travel! With great difficulty, I managed to stop my dogs. It was bitterly cold and they were moving fast to keep warm. Finally Bompas caught up, numb. I got him on the sled. "I must catch up to my men," I said. "Unless you travel faster, you'll freeze!"

It isn't easy to sit on a loaded sleigh, swaying as the dogs trot. Bompas kept bouncing off. After he had fallen off half a dozen times, I stopped my dogs. We were now far behind my men. The only thing I could do was to tie Bompas to the sled. I got a tail line around his body and fastened him on top of the load. This took time. My men, still travelling fast, were now a couple of miles ahead, lost to sight. On the smooth ice, they had left no trail. Bompas was freezing; he was utterly helpless, but I couldn't pay any attention to him. I hurried after my men. After a while I discovered that Bompas was getting loose. I stopped, wrapped my blanket robe around him, tied him fast to the load again and drove my dogs on at top speed. And, I *could* travel in those days!

But now I was uncertain about my direction. About five o'clock that afternoon I got across the ice and made for the point where my men should be. There was no sign of them. I said to Bompas, "Go to the woods, get something for a fire and boil the kettle. I'll go a couple of miles along this side of the point. By that time you'll have the fire and be warm." I

ran most of the way. Not a sign of my men, nor of their having made camp. Not a track did I see. I came back to Bompas, who had only a little spark of fire. Down the other side of the point I went and back. No sign! Bompas hadn't improved his fire. I got wood and boiled the kettle. After a bit of supper, I fed the dogs, made a sort of camp, and we rolled up in our blankets for the night. It is a wonder Bompas didn't freeze. He hadn't enough covering to keep him warm. Most of the night, he was doubled up with cramps.

We had a cup of tea in the morning. Then I told Bompas that it was a case of life or death for us both, separated as we were from my men. I said I intended taking him back to Fort Norman. He pleaded with me so urgently to continue the trip that I gave in. Thinking I would overtake my men, I went on. I had no track to guide me. I knew only the general direction. We didn't bother much about compasses in the north. The north star, the winds and common instinct were our guides. There wasn't much snow. The travelling was all right for the dogs. But I was alone with a green traveller, practically without food, and hundreds of miles from Fort Rae.

I drove on. As on the previous day, Bompas kept falling behind, delaying me. I had to wait until he rubbed the cramps out of his legs. Finally, I had to put him on the sled again. I was walking at the rate of five or six miles an hour. At places where deer had passed, the scent excited the dogs and they wanted to go off on a chase. This caused delay. The only way I could control them was to stop and tie a line from my lead dog to my belt. I didn't tie Bompas very tight, and he kept falling off. Then I lost time tying him on again.

We got over the day. Now we were in the barren region. I kept on the look-out for twigs. I picked up everyone I saw and put it in the breast of my jacket for a fire at night. I didn't stop during the day to make a fire. My provisions were on La Ferte's sled. I kept expecting to overtake him. Meanwhile, Bompas' box of chocolates saved us from starvation.

On the fifth day from Fort Norman, I began watching for the two hills we had come between in order to get on the track of my men. It was on the sixth day that I saw the hills in the distance. I reached them with all speed and went down the valley looking for the long lake. There it lay! Now I would find tracks!

When I got to the south end of the lake, I made out, in the distance, some black objects which, when I reached them, proved to be poles set in the ice by Indian fishermen to hold their nets. The Indians ought to be nearby. I followed their track to the woods, only to find that they had moved their tents. I picked up their tracks again and walked six miles before I found their camp. My men, they said, had camped at the lake the day before and gone on. I made up my mind that I would overtake them.

I tried to get the Indians to go back after Bompas. They refused. He was a Protestant. They were Roman Catholic. I had to go back for him myself. I got some meat and stuff from the Indians for my passenger and myself and for my dogs. My worry was over. I felt better tempered. My dogs—my leader—would not lose the track of the other dogs once they had found it. I think they had followed the scent of the dogs over the clear ice and all the way. They were highly intelligent.

As I travelled, I was struck by the faithfulness of my dogs. They seemed to realize the great danger we were

in and that we were trying to catch up with our party. Always they pushed on, never wanting me to go ahead to lead them. In my heart, I depended on them to get me back to the fort. Now, when Bompas fell off the sled, I was more pleasant about tying him on. Still, I was afraid he would die before I got him to the fort. He had bad cramps and was really sick.

We followed my men for five days. I was gaining on them, I knew. I made up my mind not to overtake them, but to keep half a day's travel behind. We were almost out of grub. My load was considerably lighter. My dogs had eaten almost all their provisions. How they could travel! They were on the tracks of their mates. It was all I could do to hold them back in their eagerness to reach the fort. For the first time on that long, nervous trip I sat on the sled and took it easy. Bompas weighed about 160 pounds, I about 150. Our combined weights restrained the dogs a little.

My minister had a miserable time on that trip. But he never grumbled. I shall never forget his reply when he kept falling off the sled and I, tired and worried, said, "What kind of legs have you got that you can't hang on." It was, "Mr. King, the Lord 'taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man,' Psalm 147, verse 10." I said, "Well, what the devil did he give us legs for?" My plight was too desperate to listen to preachments. He didn't continue the topic. A good fellow, Bompas, afterwards Bishop Bompas. If the trip was hard for me, it was harder for him. He did all he could to help.

After three or four days' more travelling, we struck the tip of the north arm of Great Slave Lake, about twenty-four miles from Fort Rae. Judging from one of their fire places to another it was easy to figure that I was only half a day behind my men.

Being so close to Fort Rae, they would not, I knew, start out very early in the morning. I arranged my own start accordingly. We ate the scraps we had. It was our first leisure on that harassing trip. Our sled was light. I could hardly check my excited dogs. An hour's travelling brought us to where the men had camped; there was still a fire burning. We stopped and made some tea. Then we took to the ice. I could make out specks in the distance. They were my men. I was travelling faster than they. I jumped onto my sleigh and let my dogs have their way. When my men left the lake for the trail that led to the fort, I raced after them. On ahead, as I drove up, I saw La Ferte stop to talk to the men at the store door, then go off.

I drove to the store and asked my assistant, John Hope, what report La Ferte had given about my absence. La Ferte had said that, after waiting a day for me at Bear Lake, he concluded that I had taken Bompas back to Fort Norman, and that I would return by way of Fort Simpson. The Indians came, shook hands, and made a great fuss over me. They were amazed to hear that I had made the trip alone and almost without food and in such a short time.

It took me some time to forgive La Ferte. He was a good servant. I may be wrong, but I still feel that religion was at the bottom of the thing. After this, La Ferte had a great respect for me as a traveller. It took us only seventeen days to return from Fort Norman.

I sent two packeteers, two men and sufficient supplies with Bompas to meet the packet at Fort Resolution. I gave them my dogs. They were the best at the post. He met the Fort Garry packet and was able to attend to the business for which he had come at such peril. He took the packet to Fort Simpson and was safely off my hands.

Milestones in the Progress of the Hudson's Bay Company

by Clifford Wilson

Illustrated by
James Simpkins

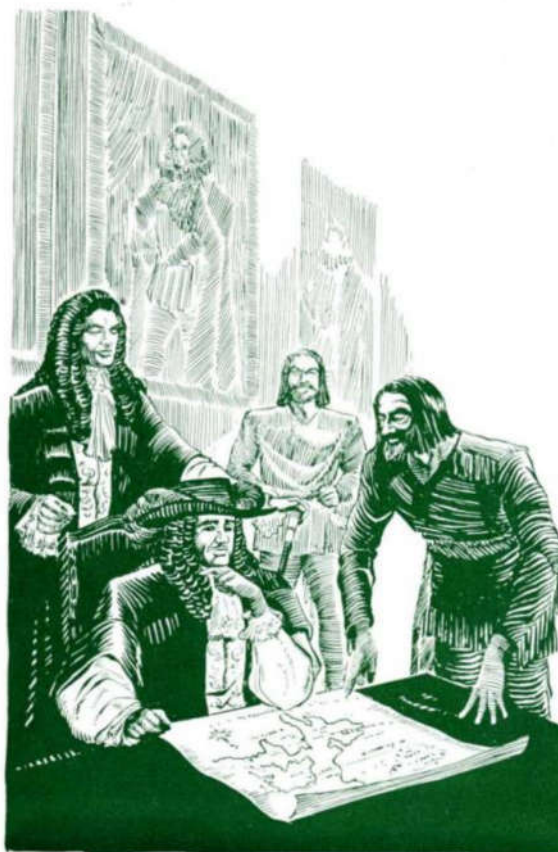
Foundation



To King Charles II at Oxford comes Sir George Carteret, bringing with him two bearded *coureurs de bois* from Canada. He begs leave to present them—Medard Chouart, Sieur des Groseilliers, and Pierre Esprit Radisson. Disgusted with their treatment at the hands of the French Government, these men have brought to His Majesty a profitable scheme for tapping the vast beaver wealth of the Canadian North.

The King questions them, learns of the great fur-bearing country around Henry Hudson's Bay. He learns, too, that these sturdy adventurers have spent many years, living and travelling in the wilderness, and trading with the Indians. They offer to lead an expedition for trading into Hudson's Bay, by way of Hudson's Strait, if the King's friends will finance a company to carry it on.

His Majesty is definitely interested, and sends them to Prince Rupert, at Windsor. Rupert agrees to form a company, but because of the war with Holland, not until 1668 is an expedition fitted out by the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay.



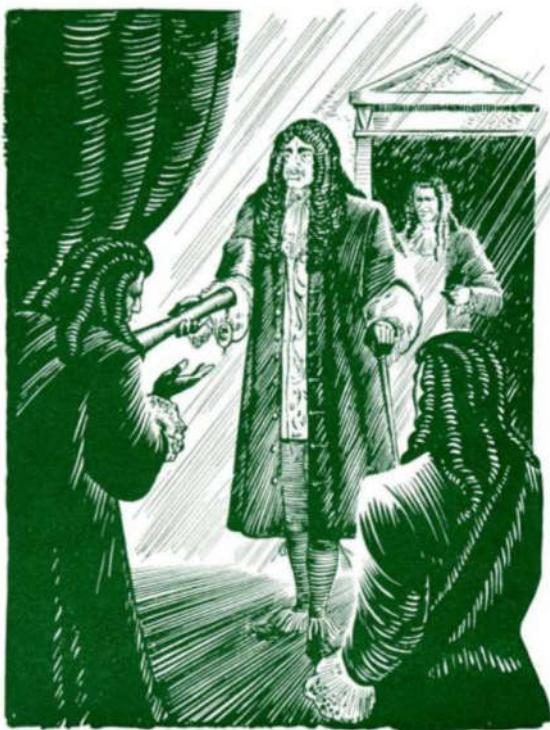
Incorporation



The first trading expedition has succeeded. On the little ketch *Nonsuch*, Des Groseilliers and Captain Gillam of New England have won through the ice of Hudson's Strait to the Bay, and have built Fort Charles at the mouth of Rupert's River. From there they have brought back a costly cargo of furs for the ladies and gallants of London.

With the proof of success before him, King Charles agrees to sanction Rupert's company, and on 2nd May, 1670, he confers upon it a Royal Charter of Incorporation. By the terms of this charter, the Company of Adventurers is given the monopoly of trade in all the lands, rivers, and straits which they may discover through Hudson's Strait. Nobody at the time knows the extent of the grant, but in time it comes to embrace the whole watershed of Hudson's Strait and Bay.

From Fort Charles, a chain of posts is flung around the shores of James and Hudson's Bays. The fur trade prospers, and every year the Company sends a ship through the Strait to take in trading goods and bring back furs.



Battles on the Bay



The English trade in Hudson's Bay soon begins to divert part of the stream of furs that forms the life blood of New France. The Indians are lured away from the French posts by better and more attractive goods, and the Governor at Quebec sees that drastic measures must be taken. From land and sea, picked French fighting men attack the traders at the lonely seacoast forts. Hudson's Bay resounds with the exploits of the Le Moyne brothers of Montreal. Moose River, Fort Charles, Albany River, and York Factory fall to the invaders. Garrisons surrender and are driven out to perish in the snowy wilderness. Back come the English and storm the forts again. Sometimes the cross of St. George floats above the scarred log bastions, sometimes the lilies of France. Le Moyne D'Iberville, scourge of the Bay, trounces three British ships with his one, then goes ashore and takes York Factory.

At last, the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 puts an end to the fighting, and the following year, armed with a commission from Queen Anne, Company officers take over all forts on the Bay that are still held by the French.



Westward Exploration



With the object of encouraging the Indians to bring their furs to the Bay, scores of one-man expeditions are sent out into the West with returning

Indians who have come down to trade. First to voyage into the interior is Henry Kelsey, a young apprentice who in 1690 travels from York Factory into what is now Saskatchewan with a band of Assiniboine Indians. Two years later he returns, bringing with him a flotilla of Indian canoes laden with furs.

Wars with the French interfere with further expeditions for several years. After peace comes, there is no more competition for another quarter-century. Then La Verendrye from Montreal penetrates to the prairies, and builds a series of forts across the trade routes to the Bay. At these posts, the French waylay the Indian canoes on their way to the English.

To meet this new threat, an expedition is sent west under Anthony Henday, in 1754. He travels as far as the Blackfoot country, meeting some French traders on the Saskatchewan who have come by canoe from the St. Lawrence. In the succeeding twenty years, no less than sixty expeditions are sent into the interior by the Company, to bring the Indians down to trade. But no Company forts are built farther inland than Henley House, some one hundred and fifty miles from Albany.



THE BEAVER, December 1941

Westward Penetration

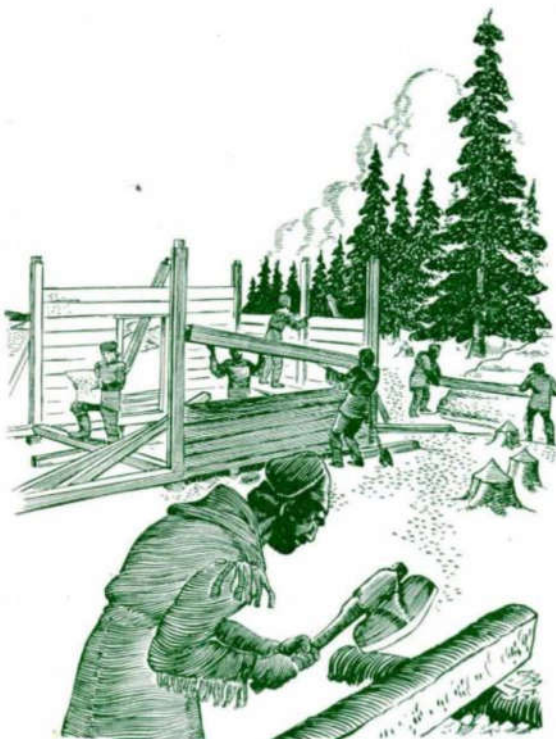


Canada has surrendered at Montreal to General Amherst, and for a few years the men of the Hudson's Bay Company can enjoy their

monopoly of trade, unhampered by the French. But soon a new menace arises. Guided by the hardy Canadian *voyageurs* who have paddled the great canoes of La Verendrye and his successors into the middle west, a flood of shrewd, bold, reckless traders is surging westwards from Montreal.

These men think no more of the perils and hardships of a fifteen-hundred-mile canoe journey, than they do of the legal rights of a royally chartered company. Following the practice of the French, they build a chain of forts into the very hunting grounds of the Indians, and divert the stream of furs in an ever-increasing flow down the Upper Lakes and Ottawa to the St. Lawrence.

There is only one way to combat this opposition, and in 1774 Samuel Hearne, recently returned from his discovery of the overland route to the Arctic Ocean, is sent west to build the Company's first fort in the interior—Cumberland House, near the Saskatchewan. From there a network of forts and trade routes spreads out over Rupert's Land and the rich fur country of the Athabasca.



First Settlement



The problem of feeding the fur brigades that travel the inland waterways, leads to the establishment of the first farming settlement on the Canadian prairies. Lord Selkirk, philanthropic Scottish peer, has bought up a large share of the Company's stock, and on condition that he will plant a colony of farmers on the Red River, has been granted a hundred and sixteen thousand square miles of territory around the south end of Lake Winnipeg.

His first settlers arrive at York Factory in 1811, and next year begin a settlement where Winnipeg now stands, at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. More groups follow, to be received with mixed feelings by the fur traders. The "potters" from Montreal, who by now have formed themselves into the powerful North-West Company, are hostile, for the settlement cuts right across their trade routes to the Athabasca country.

Selkirk, however, legally fortified by the power of the Royal Charter, stands firm on his rights. Crop failures compel the settlers to seek a large part of their food supply in the roving herds of buffalo, and in 1814, the governor of the colony boldly prohibits the export of dried buffalo meat from the great area owned by Selkirk.



Strife in the Wilderness



The Red River is a long way from London, and the Nor'-westers, who have always depended on the buffalo meat of that region to feed their voyageurs, blandly ignore the embargo. Several of their partners are justices of the peace in lower Canada, and a warrant for the arrest of the colony's governor, charged with illegal seizure of food, is easily arranged. While he is taken to trial at Fort William, the Nor'-westers at nearby Fort Gibraltar rouse the half-breeds against the settlers. In 1815, organized vandalism is let loose. Crops and barns are destroyed, and the terrified farmers retreat to the other end of Lake Winnipeg, leaving desolation behind them.

At last the Great Company is aroused. In Montreal, stronghold of the Canadian Company, Colin Robertson recruits a shock brigade of a hundred voyageurs and takes them via the Great Lakes to Lake Winnipeg. Under his protection the settlers return to their farms and Robertson proceeds to seize Fort Gibraltar, as well as the express canoe from Montreal, thus discovering plans for the destruction of the Red River Settlement. Finally in June, 1816, a climax is reached, when seventy mounted half-breeds in the pay of the North-West Company attack a party of settlers at Seven Oaks, and massacre Governor Semple and twenty others.



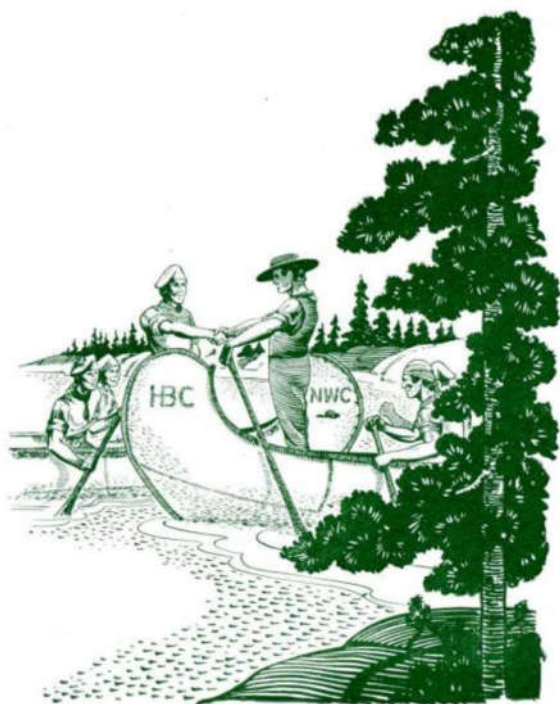
Union



In 1820, George Simpson is sent out from the London Office to take charge of the Company's business in Canada, in case the resident governor should be arrested by the North-westers. With cool courage, he leads a successful campaign against the Montrealers in far Athabasca.

But now the struggle is in its closing stages. Negotiations are under way in London for the union of the two companies. William and Simon McGillivray go over to represent the Montreal partners; Dr. John McLoughlin and Angus Bethune to represent the disgruntled wintering partners. The upshot of the deliberations is that in March, 1821, the two great companies unite under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Nicholas Garry, Deputy Governor of the Company, is sent out to supervise the distribution of chief factors and chief traders among the posts in Canada. Travelling in a great semi-circle, he leaves Montreal in the spring, reaches the Red River in the summer and sails from York Factory in the fall, leaving behind him the beginnings of a strongly united company.



Expansion



By an Act of Parliament, the trade monopoly of the new Hudson's Bay Company is expanded to include not only Rupert's Land, but also the rest of the Indian and Eskimo territories east of the Rocky Mountains. At the same time, in the territory west of the Rockies, it is granted sole right of British trade.

George Simpson is made governor of the huge Northern Department, covering the Canadian West and North and the Pacific Coast. Later, he is made Governor-in-Chief of all the Company's territories in America. Under his brilliant direction and driving power, the Company expands mightily. He himself travels continually by canoe, by horse, and by dog-sled, visiting the forts that stretch from coast to coast, and welding the rival factions into one smoothly functioning machine.

In this task he is ably supported by a remarkable group of commissioned officers—the chief factors and chief traders in charge of the fur trade districts. It is these men who establish the traditions of courage and loyalty and fair dealing which ennoble the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. Penetrating into the unknown wilderness among fierce tribes of Indians, they form the spearhead of civilization in the Canadian West.



To the Pacific



Up to 1824, the fur trade of the Pacific Coast has been carried on almost entirely by eastern Americans from coastwise ships. Chief Factor

Dr. John McLoughlin is put in charge of the huge Columbia District and, with Simpson, chooses a site for his headquarters on the north bank of the Columbia, a hundred miles from its mouth. This fertile spot is selected so that Fort Vancouver—as it is named—may become a centre of food supply for other forts on the Pacific.

More forts follow, stretching up the coast to Russian America—now Alaska. Fort Vancouver grows and prospers. From the United States, independent parties arrive to share in the wealth of the Pacific North-West. The first settlers, in the person of Methodist missionaries, are welcomed at the fort in 1834 and establish a mission near by. These form the vanguard of the great army of settlers which will one day populate the country around the Columbia River.

In time, it becomes evident that the Americans, through sheer weight of numbers will claim the territory north, as well as south of the Columbia River; and in 1843, Fort Victoria on Vancouver's Island is established by James Douglas, to take the place of Fort Vancouver as headquarters of the district.



To the Arctic



The Company also sends out its officers to explore the far northwest and the Arctic. Gradually, as they push farther and farther along the

river highways into the unknown, the map of northern Canada begins to take shape. McLeod explores the Liard, Black the Finlay, Bell crosses the mountains from the Mackenzie to the Yukon, Murray follows his route and builds Fort Yukon in Russian territory, Campbell discovers the Pelly and follows it downstream to Murray's fort.

Meanwhile, the naval explorers, Captains Franklin and Back, have mapped a great deal of the Arctic coastline. But great gaps remain, and Company officers are sent north to complete the discoveries. Dease and Simpson push westwards as far as Point Barrow, and eastwards beyond King William Land. Rae, on the first of his five Arctic expeditions, explores the coastline east of that, and afterwards discovers more territory in his search for the lost Franklin party.

In the east, Hendry crosses from Richmond Gulf to the Koksoak River, and McLean travels overland from Ungava Bay to Hamilton Inlet.

Most of these expeditions result in new trading forts. But the Arctic is still considered too remote to repay the cost of trading there.

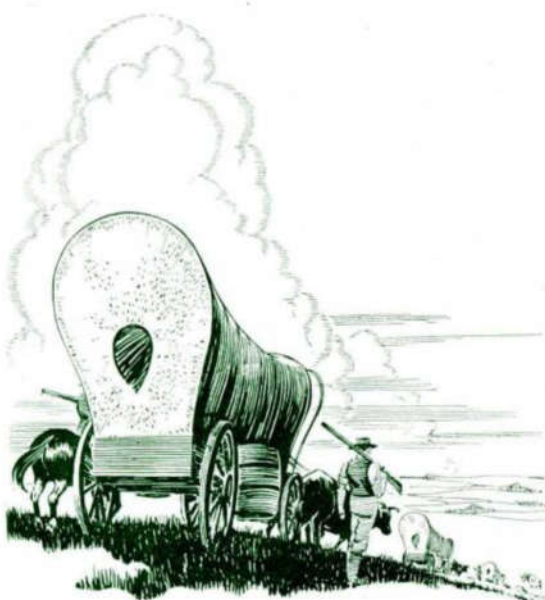


Surrender of the West



The Company's monopoly of trade is due to be renewed in 1858. But eastern Canadians are clamoring for admittance to the great Fertile Belt of the prairies, and the Red River settlers are growing restive under the company's firm-handed rule. An appeal for redress is made to the British Government, and as a result, a parliamentary committee, including in its members W. E. Gladstone, is set up in 1857 to enquire into the situation. The committee recommends that the Red River and Saskatchewan districts be ceded to Canada, when she is able to cope with them, but that in those parts where settlement is unfeasible, the Company should remain in control.

Ten years later, four of the five eastern provinces unite to form the Dominion of Canada, and provision is made for the eventual admission of Rupert's Land and the Northwest Territories. In 1869, the Company surrenders its two-hundred-year hold on Rupert's Land, in exchange for £300,000 and some seven million acres of land in the Fertile Belt. But the half-breeds of the Red River Colony refuse to yield their hereditary lands to the incoming strangers, and rise up in revolt. When peace has been brought about through negotiation, a stream of settlers begins to pour into the virgin acres of the West.



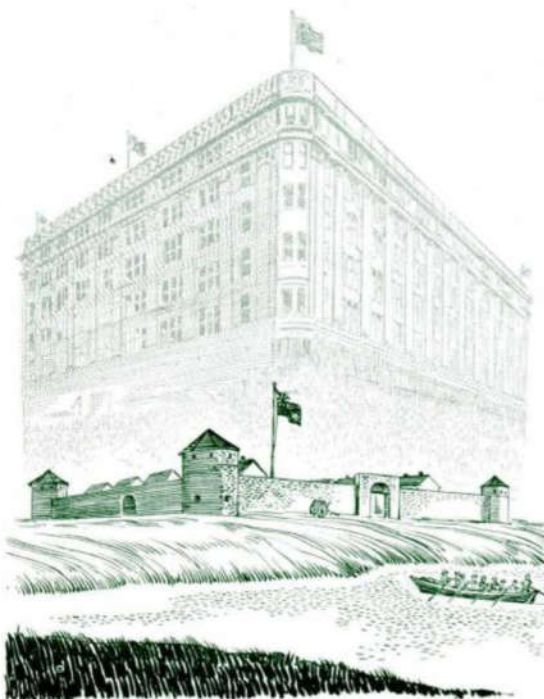
THE BEAVER, December 1941

Adaptation



With the influx of settlers, the frontier of the fur trade is thrown back. But the old Company adapts itself with vigour to changing conditions. Villages, such as Winnipeg and Edmonton and Victoria, grow up around some of the fur trade posts, and these posts are converted into retail stores to supply the needs of the growing population. Basing their policy on the Company's far-reaching reputation for goods of the finest quality, the stores keep step with their communities as they grow from villages into towns and cities.

Railways cross the prairies and the mountains, bringing an ever-increasing flood of immigrants. A Land Department is set up to administer the sale of the Company's share in the Fertile Belt, and 350,000 acres are sold in one year alone. A Wholesale Department is created to distribute the blankets and tobacco and tea which through two centuries of fur trading have become a byword throughout the West. The fur trade itself, far from retiring into semi-obscurity, expands into new fields, and in the early years of the twentieth century reaches out to establish posts in the treeless regions of the Eskimo.



The Company To-day



To-day, all these departments carry on business with their headquarters in Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg, where the Canadian Committee directs their activities.

The Fur Trade has over two hundred posts stretching from sea to sea. Ninety-two of them are equipped with short-wave radio, and eleven of these send daily weather reports to the Government. In addition to its posts, the Fur Trade operates R.M.S. *Nascopie*, the famous Eastern Arctic supply ship; four motor schooners; an aeroplane; innumerable dog-teams, canoes and small boats; and, in the Mackenzie Area, four stern-wheelers, ten tugs, and thirty barges. The Fur Trade also has four beaver sanctuaries, three muskrat preserves, and an experimental fur farm. The Raw Fur Department operates eight branches where furs are bought from other sources.

The Land Department is still actively selling its farm lands, now amounting to a million and a half acres, which remain from the original seven million. It also holds the mineral rights in four and a half million acres, which include a number of producing coal mines and oil wells.

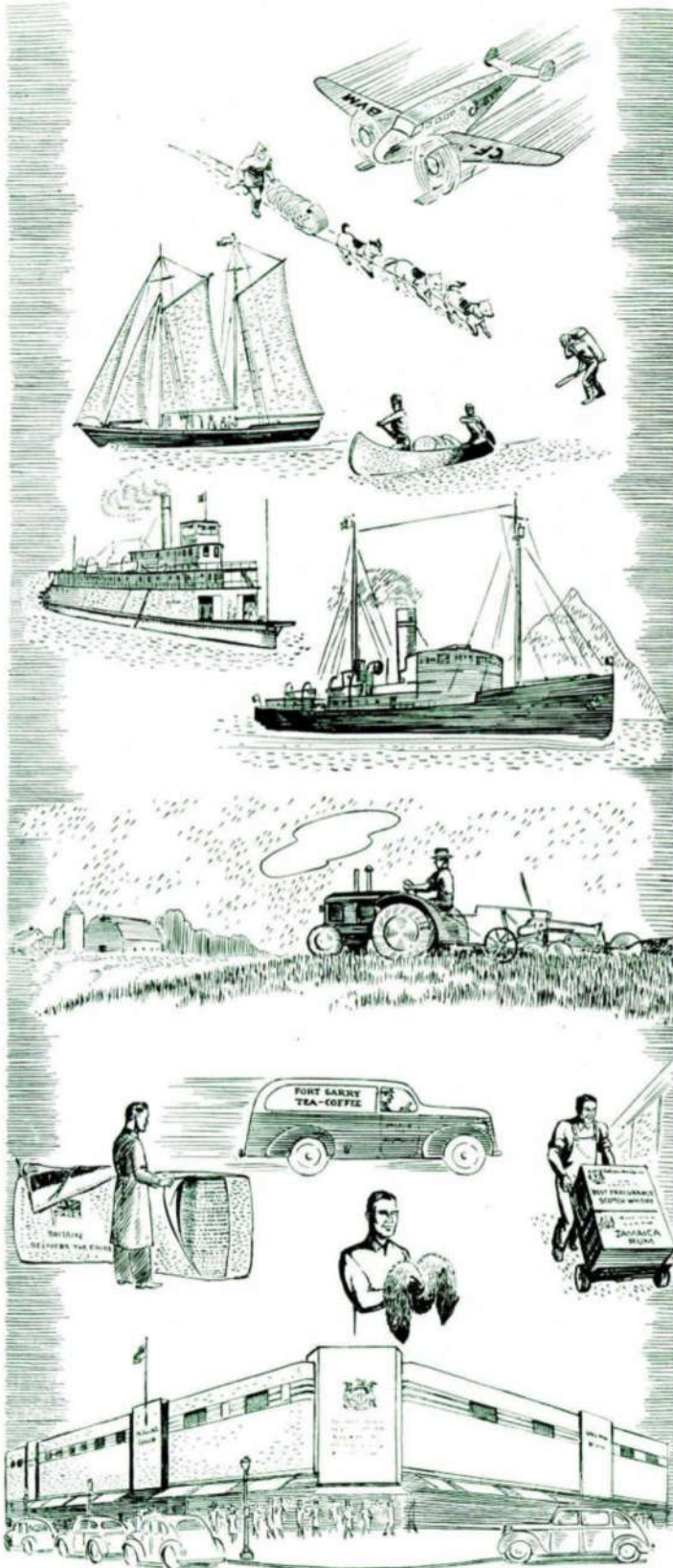
The Wholesale Department distributes the famous Hudson's Bay "Point" blankets, tobacco, tea and coffee, "Good Spirits," and Birds Eye Frosted Foods; and it also operates tea and coffee plants at Winnipeg and Vancouver.

The Retail Stores Department operates great department stores in Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon and Winnipeg, and eight smaller stores from the Rockies to the Lower St. Lawrence.

The headquarters of the Company as a whole remains in London, where it has been since the foundation, and where the Governor and Committee determine all matters of principle and policy. There, from 1672 to 1940, all the raw furs collected by the Company in Canada were sold at auction. Last year, however, the Company fur sales were transferred to New York, where they are handled by Lampson, Fraser & Huth, Inc., one of HBC's wholly-owned subsidiaries.

The Company is still trading into Hudson's Bay, and it is still a company of adventurers. The royally granted monopoly is a thing of the past. But the modern world of competitive commerce, as well as the rigours of the wilderness, call for the qualities of the adventurer no less than did the unexplored continent of Rupert's time.

The Hudson's Bay Company to-day, in fact, is a vital, forward-looking organization. For its traditions, built up by the men who have served it during two and three-quarter centuries, are the traditions of youth—progress and adaptability, courage and initiative. These have enabled it to survive the trials and adversities of the years, and to emerge from each encounter with new strength and new confidence in the future.



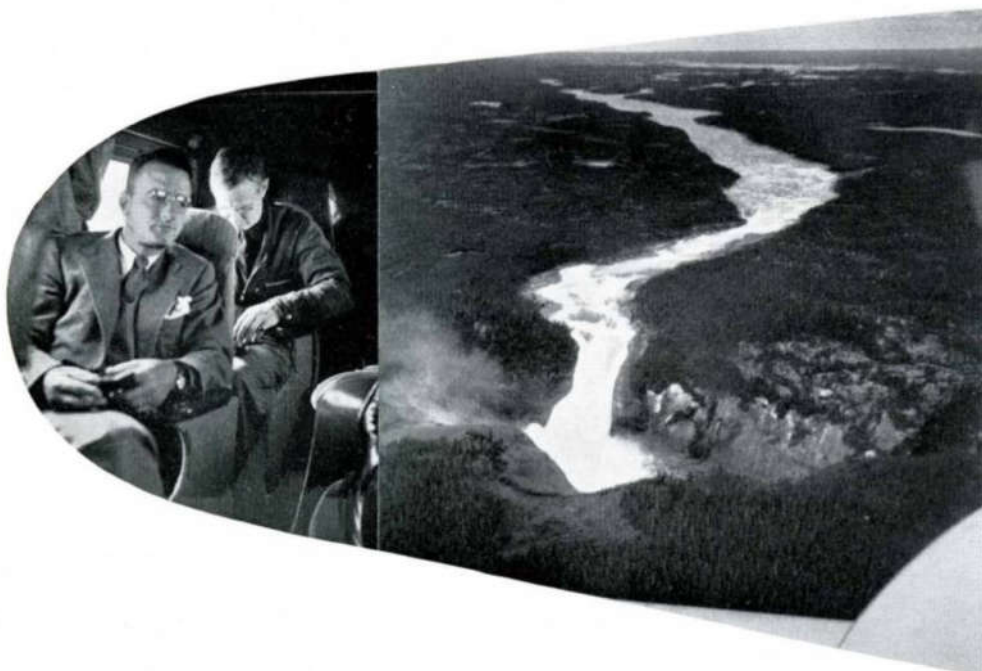


WINTER LANDSCAPE

Fort McKenzie, P.Q.

by C. N. Stephen

The Last Trip



UP to the end of July this year, the big twin-engined Company Beechcraft, CF-BMI, had visited every fur trade district except Labrador. Bought in April 1939, she had covered almost a hundred thousand miles in the Company's service, flying in all sorts of weather, and all over the west and northwest, at all seasons of the year except the freeze-up and break-up.

Her flight routes during the twenty-eight months of her operation are shown on the largest of the accompanying maps. During the first summer, she made one of the longest trips in the history of Canadian aviation. Leaving Edmonton August 8, she flew up the Mackenzie to Aklavik, then over to Holman Island and eastward across the Central Arctic to King William Land, down to Baker Lake and Churchill, and so home to Winnipeg, arriving there after a 4500-mile trip only thirteen days after setting out.

When plans were announced for making an inspection trip through the bitter cold of the Western Arctic the following winter, the wiseacres shook their heads and said that it was simply asking for trouble. But the trip was made without a mishap. As on all her flights, the great machine performed beautifully, and the time saved was incalculable. Once again, as so often in the past, the Hudson's Bay Company was pioneering in the North.

It is doubtful, in fact, if any aeroplane in Canada has been operated so consistently, and certainly none has covered the Dominion of Canada so thoroughly, as CF-BMI.

This summer, it was planned to use her on an inspection trip of eastern posts, and at the beginning of August she left Montreal. On board were P. A. Chester, General Manager; R. H. Chesshire, assistant manager,

Fur Trade Department; Dr. Frederick F. Tisdall, chairman of the Committee on Nutrition of the Canadian Medical Association; Duncan McLaren, pilot; and Jerry Buchan, engineer.

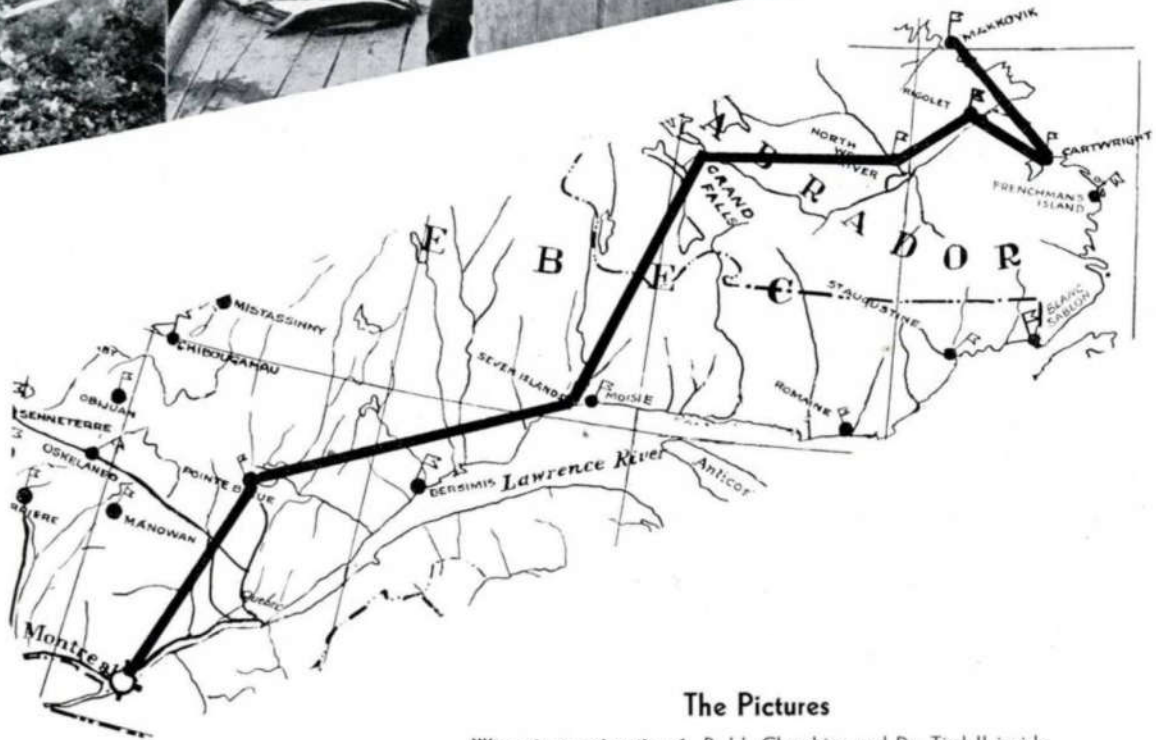
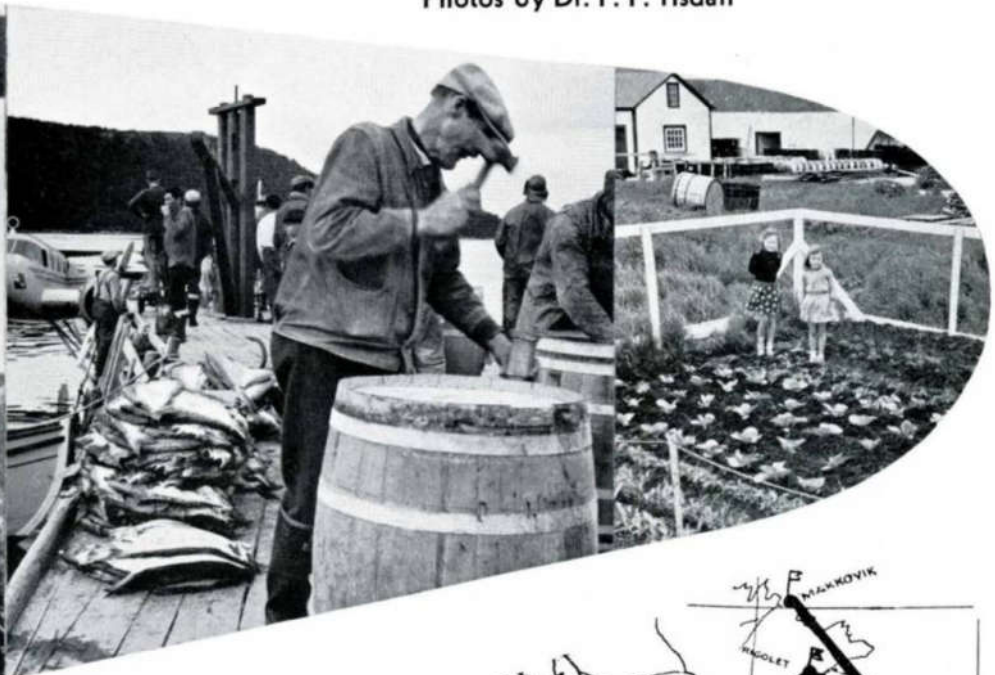
Dr. Tisdall, who has been making an extended study of nutrition among the white men and natives at northern H.B.C. posts, and who is the author of *Your Food and Health in the North*, took time off from his exacting work at Toronto hospitals to see what improvements in the men's health his recommendations for diet have brought about. En route, he took most of the photographs which illustrate this article.

The route followed is shown on the accompanying maps. From Fort



of CF-BMI

Photos by Dr. F. F. Tisdall



The Pictures

Wing-tip to wing-tip: 1. R. H. Chesshire and Dr. Tisdall inside the plane. 2. The Great Falls of the Hamilton River, one-and-a-half times as high as Niagara, but seldom seen by man. 3. Supper on "McLaren Lake," between the falls and North West River post. The General Manager superintends the culinary operations while Pilot McLaren tends the fire. Dr. Tisdall (right) and Engineer Buchan smile with anticipation. 4. Sealing up barrels of salt salmon at Rigolet. BMI on the left. 5. The two little daughters of Post Manager R. M. Howell in the garden at Cartwright.

Fuselage: A cloud-shadowed valley in Labrador.

Tail: Inspecting the post at Makkovik. Messrs. Chester and Chesshire, with Post Manager H. Leaman and his wife and baby girl.



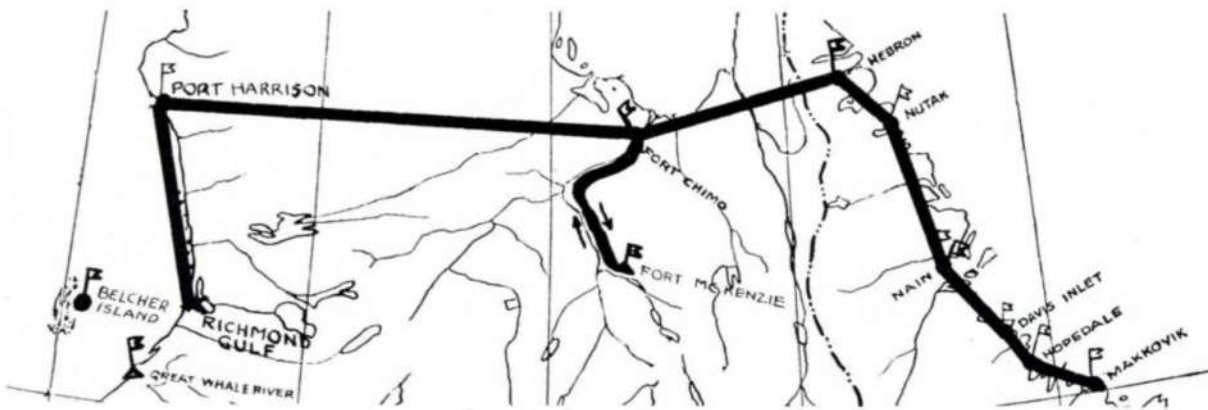


The post at Nain, on the coast of Labrador

F. F. Tisdall

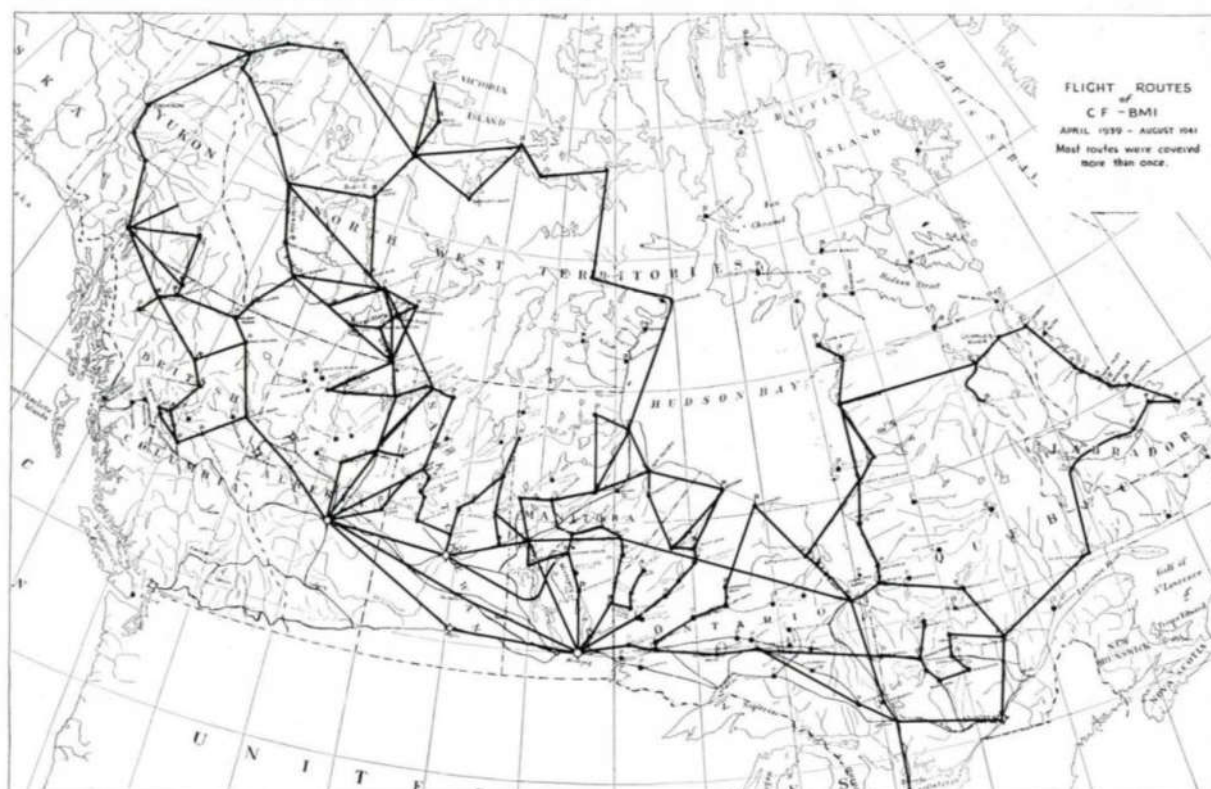
Chimo, their intended course lay north across Hudson Strait to Baffin Island; but the extraordinary amount of ice this year made those plans unfeasible. They therefore turned south, and followed the course of the Koksoak and Kaniapiskau Rivers to Fort McKenzie

and back, over country described by C. N. Stephen in the June *Beaver*. At Port Harrison they met the *Nascope*, and next day, August 12, flew down the coast to Richmond Gulf, where stood a Company outpost used only in the winter. In landing there a slight amount of





Left: View from the top of the radio mast at Fort McKenzie. BMI can be seen behind the trees. Above: On the beach at Port Harrison, Hudson Bay.



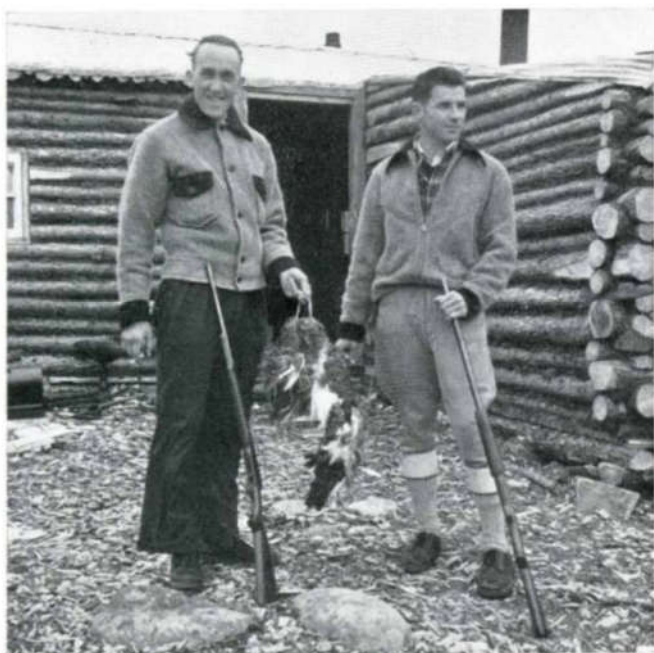
Right: The waves wash over the damaged pontoons at Richmond Gulf.

damage was done to the floats by a large wave; but, though slight, it was serious enough to immobilize BMI until repair parts could be flown in.

An SOS was sent out on the plane's wireless, asking that another plane be sent to Richmond Gulf. Post Manager O. M. Demment at Cape Dorset, 560 miles away, heard the call, and radioed Hudson's Bay House in Winnipeg. (Later it was discovered that Arctie Bay, 1220 miles away, also picked up the SOS and heard Demment answering.) From Winnipeg a wire was sent to North Bay, and soon a Canadian Airways plane was on its way north to rescue the shipwrecked travellers.

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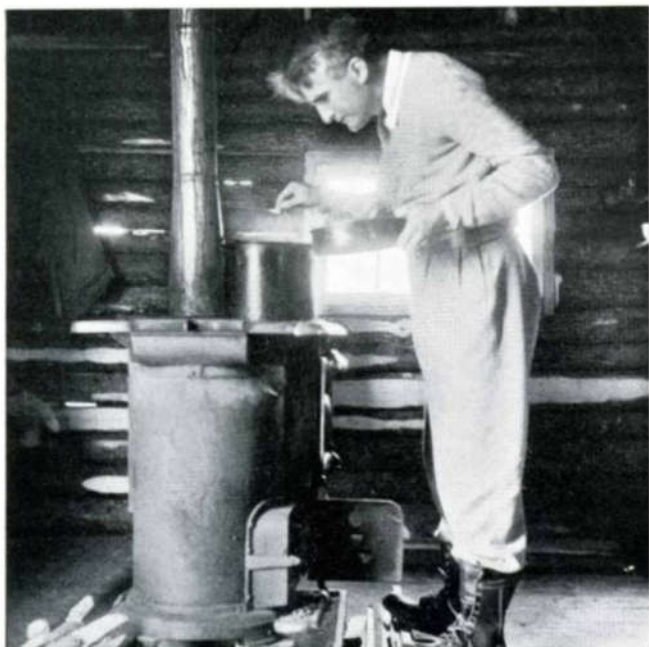




The Hunters. Jerry Buchan and Dunc McLaren bring in five brace of ptarmigan to the log shack at Richmond Gulf.

Shortly after Pilot McLaren had returned from the south with the repair parts, BMI was ready to be flown away. She was refloated on the night of September 4, by the light of the moon; but during the night, as she lay at anchor, a fifty-mile an hour gale arose. For several hours she bravely weathered the storm; but at last a great wave tilted her so high that one wing was plunged under the water. Slowly that wing was dragged under, until the other was standing ver-

The Chef. P. A. Chester adds a soupcon of something to his delicious potage de ptarmigan.



The Sawyers. R. H. Chesshire holds the log while P. A. Chester bucks some firewood for the coming feast.

tically into the air. And in a few hours, the great machine had disappeared beneath the waves.

So one more loss is added to the long list of H B C craft that have been destroyed by the elements. Ever since the *Prince Rupert* went to her grave two hundred and sixty years ago, the annals of Company navigation in Hudson Strait and Bay have been interspersed with reports of foundered ships. And since the fur trade moved farther north in this century, the grinding ice of

The Feasters. Squab at the Chateau Frontenac never tasted better than ptarmigan at the Chalet Richmond.





BMI stops here

F. F. Tisdall

the Arctic has taken a heavy toll. But the fur trade is a dangerous business, subject to the perils of the sea and the wilderness, and such losses are part of the reckoning.

During the short span of her life, CF-BMI became known to many fur traders throughout the Company's wide domains, who will be shocked to hear of her loss. But none more so than Wing-Commander Paul

Davoud and Flight Lieutenant Harold Winny of the R.C.A.F., who in happier days piloted her for so many thousands of miles through the skyways of the North.

The fine work she performed will be carried on by a sister-ship, CF-BVM. McLaren and Buchan fetched her from below the border last month, and soon she will be roaring away over the snow, northward bound for the far-flung posts of the Fur Trade.

The Tale of Mickey the Beaver

By Doris Forbes
Red Deer, Alberta

A little girl of eleven tells
how she raised a beaver
from a kit.



Doris Forbes and Mickey, her seventy-pound pet.

A. Keen

MY pet beaver, Mickey, came to us by accident. It was in June of 1939 that we got him. A large number of beaver were living in the Waskasoo Creek, which flows past our house at Red Deer, Alberta, but some men were trapping them against the law at that time and we think that Mickey's mother got caught and killed. Anyway, a high school girl called Jean Yuill found Mickey on the sidewalk near our house one morning on her way to school. The tiny beaver kitten was hurt. He couldn't move his hind legs at all and his back was all scratched and bleeding, and one front shoulder was bleeding too.

Jean picked him up and carried him over to my Dad, who was out in the yard at the time. Dad brought him into the house to Mother, and as Mother was once a nurse she knew how to fix up his cuts. After Mother and Dad had looked after his wounds, they wondered what they could feed him. Mother heated some milk and Dad held a spoon against his mouth while mother poured the milk into the spoon. The little beaver got the idea right away, because he was very hungry. He put up his front paws, which look like hands, and one hand grabbed the spoon handle while the other hand hung on to the end of the spoon and hugged it close. He was really hungry, and he drank and drank until his stomach swelled up big. Then he laid down to sleep, so Dad found a shoe-box and mother padded it with soft cloths, and they put him under the stove where it was warm.

I came from school at noon, and that was the first time I saw him. Of course, he didn't have a name then, but I called him Mickey straight off, and that is the name we've used for him ever since. I knew right away that I wanted Mickey for a pet, and Mother let me help feed him and look after his wounds. Dad went up

town and saw Sergeant Matheson of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and this policeman said it was all right for us to have Mickey. Beavers belong to the government, so a person has to have permission to own one. I found out later that Sergeant Matheson and my Dad and Mother didn't think Mickey would live, but I knew he would.

Anyway, we looked after him as well as we could and in three days the paralysis went out of his back legs and a week later his back and shoulder cuts started to close up. By this time he was friendly as could be with all of us. He had tried to nip Mother the first day while she was handling him, but after that he never wanted to bite any of us. He soon learned his name and would come waddling across the floor when I called him. We learned that he would be around six or seven weeks old at that time. He was only about ten inches long, counting his tail, and he could sit on my hand easily. You should see him now. He measures forty-four inches long and he's so heavy I can't lift him at all.

We didn't know what to feed Mickey at first. Mother thought milk was the best food for a baby beaver, and Mickey thought so too. We tried other things, though. Dad gathered clover leaves and willow twigs and poplar bark and Mickey nibbled at them all. We even fed him hamburger until we learned that beavers never eat meat. I guess Mickey didn't know that either, because he ate some. But he liked bread better, and bread and milk became his favourite food. We found out a little later that he was very fond of fruit, and he'll eat just any kind he can get. A box of apples lasts him only one month, and 25¢ worth of bananas last him two days. He takes hold of any fruit we give him with both hands, holding it up against

his mouth and making a funny little "mew" sound like a baby, because he's happy.

Well, the news soon got around that we had a baby beaver at our house, and it seemed like every person in Red Deer wanted to have a look at Mickey. One Sunday we had fifty different people come to see him. Dad hunted out a large pan and filled it full of water from the creek and Mickey thought that was swell. He climbed in and paddled around, having a grand time. The creek is only about a hundred feet from our house and we took him down to the water there often. Mickey swam there a little, but he never went far from us. There were other beaver on the creek at that time, you see, and Mickey was afraid of them. Anyway, he always came running after us as soon as we started for home.

The papers printed the news about us having a pet beaver and people from out of town started to come to see him too. A couple of tourists all the way from Switzerland were staying at Banff when they heard about Mickey, so they came to Red Deer just to see him. Mrs. Bloch-hiller—that was the lady's name—gave me a beautiful Swiss-made purse as a present when I gave her a picture of Mickey, and Mr. Bloch-hiller gave me some real Swiss chocolate, which Mickey and I ate and liked. Then, later in the summer, Mr. and Mrs. Wendell Chapman of Los Angeles, California, came to Red Deer with their big trailer and stayed at the auto camp while they took hundreds of pictures of Mickey and me. They took moving pictures as well as still pictures, and later sold some of the movies to Hollywood film companies. They gave me a book they had written about Natchtail, a beaver they had once known, and they took Mother and Dad and Mickey and me out to Sylvan Lake in their car and Mickey did love that. Sylvan Lake is fifteen miles from Red Deer, a famous summer resort where people go for holidays, and I took my bathing suit with me and went in swimming with Mickey. He would swim away out into the lake until he got tired, then turn around and come to me and mew until I picked him up in my arms and gave him a rest. While we were at Sylvan Lake we fed Mickey an ice cream cone, and it was really funny to see him eat it. The ice cream melted and dripped over his fur, and Mickey tried to lick it off and set up a funny wailing cry because he

Mickey, aged four months, gets a feed from his friend.



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At Sylvan Lake.

Wendell Chapman

was worried about getting messed up, and also worried about losing the ice cream. Mickey is very clean, and spends a lot of his time combing out his fur with the big claw on the inside of his hind feet. He doesn't like to be dirty.

My Dad dug out a big hole in the back yard and we filled it full of well water, and while it was still fresh I used to go in swimming with Mickey there. He'd dive into the deep water and tickle my toes and make me jump. Pretty soon he got the pool all cluttered up, by carting in sticks and by digging at the sides, so I had to keep out of it and leave him there alone. People liked to see him swim and liked to look at his funny flat tail and his big webbed hind feet which he uses when swimming. He can swim real fast.

When school started again after the summer holidays the teacher asked me to bring Mickey to school one Friday afternoon to show the children. So I carried Mickey to school with me and showed him to the pupils in my grade as well as to pupils in four other classrooms. They asked a lot of questions about what he ate and what he did, and all the Grade One pupils came up to the front in single file and patted Mickey and touched his tail. Mickey didn't mind at all.

That first winter we didn't quite know what to do with Mickey. We have a garage we don't use and we kept him locked up there during the day—Mickey sleeps all day until around five o'clock in the afternoon, unless we wake him up special. Dad built him a real warm kennel and put it in the garage, and we put in poplar and willow logs for him to chew on, so he was quite happy there. When he woke up at five on a winter day, he banged on the garage door until Mother or Dad or I went and got him and brought him into the house. We let him play in the house until our bedtime, then we put him back into the garage. He would play there until nearly dawn, then he would get into his kennel and fall asleep.

We had to teach him that he mustn't chew our house furniture. At first it was hard, because he has awfully sharp teeth and loves gnawing wood, but we soon taught him that we needed the furniture for ourselves. He used to take sticks out of the fire-wood box and stack them around the floor, but that got too



Gnawing down a tree? . . . Well anyway, he's got the right stance.

A. Keen

messy and we coaxed him to use slippers instead. He would line up the slippers just like he was barring off the kitchen floor to make a dam. Out in the garage he shifts his boards and logs around every night, sometimes piling them in a corner like a beaver house, sometimes making a dam across the garage floor. He is awfully strong and can move our fifty-pound kitchen table easy by dragging it. Once when Mother had to go up town and leave Mickey alone in the kitchen, he piled the table and three chairs, a stool, and a small table tight against the outside door, and Mother couldn't get inside when she came home.

That first winter the Alberta Natural History Society held a meeting at our house one night to meet

Mickey. We had a good time that night and Mickey behaved just grand. He had a wrestle with Dad, sat up and begged for food from Mother, and let me take him around for each member of the club to pet. He even climbed onto the laps of some of the lady members, which seemed to scare them a little. Mickey was pretty big then, though not as big as he is now. He weighed forty pounds then, but he weighs more than seventy pounds now, which is pretty big for a beaver. The Natural History Society made Mickey and the rest of our family honorary members of the society and we go to all the meetings now. Each member brought Mickey a present that night, and someone must have told them what he liked. There were canned



So-o-o big!

Henry Mar

peaches, canned pears, canned apricots, dried apricots, carrots, lettuce, and even a bottle of pickles. Mickey loves pickles. Mr. G. N. Finn, who was president of the society at that time, made a nice speech and thanked our family for looking after this orphaned beaver so well, and then he gave me a present of a bird book.

Mickey froze his tail in February that winter. He came in from the garage mewing real loud. It was frozen solid, and we were all pretty worried and didn't know what to do. But Mickey himself knew. He got hold of his tail and started to massage it, beginning at the base and working towards the tip. He was restoring circulation, Mother said. He worked on it for hours and hours and finally the tail got all better and healed up good as new. That same winter I caught whooping cough. Mickey called to visit me in my bedroom every evening and so he caught whooping cough too. Mother said it was awfully funny to see Mickey sitting up on his hind legs, his front paws hugged around his chest, rocking back and forth while he whooped with the cough.

He came through that winter fine and we've never had any trouble with him since, knowing how to look after him now. He still eats all the fruit he can get, and still likes bread and milk. He likes candy, too. The editor of this magazine wanted us to get a picture of Mickey chopping down a tree, and Mother tried, but Mickey always seemed to like working best when it was too dark to take a picture. So Mother and I remembered about Mickey liking candy, and we melted some liquorice and spread it on a tree cut Mickey had started and Mickey sat there and went after that candy while we got his picture.

Lots of people still come to see Mickey. Madame de Gripenberg, the wife of the Finnish consul who was speaking all over Canada last fall for the Red Cross, came and saw my pet while she was at Red Deer. A big party of Australian air-men came up from Calgary just to see him, and English, Scotch, and Irish air-men from the R.A.F. school at Penhold, eight miles from Red Deer, come to see him nearly every day, as well as soldiers from the Army Service Corps camp at Red Deer. Tourists visiting Red Deer hear about Mickey and come to see him. Recently, all the members of the Elgar Junior Choir of Vancouver came to see Mickey while I was still sick in bed. They went out on the lawn and sang some lovely songs to cheer me up. So did the

Innisfail Brownie Pack when they came. I'm better now and go to school again, but Mickey used to come and see me every day while I was in bed for months and months. Mother used to take the vacuum cleaner and go over him, before letting Mickey climb the stairs to my room. Mickey loves getting cleaned by the vacuum cleaner. We spread a bath mat on the bed and Mickey would lie on it nice and quiet and let me talk to him and pet him while he visited. He's far more tame than a pet dog, I think, and he and our new collie dog from uncle's farm are great friends, and Mickey and little Jack, the collie's pup, get on fine too.

I get a lot of letters from people, asking about Mickey. Mr. Kerry Wood, a friend of mine at Red Deer, talked about Mickey over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation last spring, and people all over Canada and down in the States heard the talk and wrote me and asked for pictures of Mickey. Mother counted up one time and found we'd given away over a hundred pictures of Mickey to strangers who called, and that doesn't count the hundreds of people who come with their own cameras and take pictures of Mickey themselves. So he's getting to be well known now and every important visitor to Red Deer comes to our home to see him.

A lot of people wonder what will happen to Mickey when he gets older. They think he may want to run away and go back to live in the wilds again. Well, Dad and Mother and I won't stop him, if that's what Mickey wants. We want Mickey to be happy, but I know I'll feel pretty bad myself if Mickey ever leaves me. He's the best pet I ever had, and I love him with all my heart.

Mickey sits happily on the sofa while Doris reads about his pals in one of the Wendell Chapmans' books. Henry Mar



MISTASSINNY

in Winter

by S. R.

Left: Indians coming home across Lake Mistassiny after a moose hunt, their toboggans loaded with meat.

Below: They unload the moose-meat while hungry dogs and children look on.



One of the women lights up in the store while bartering some furs she has picked up en route.

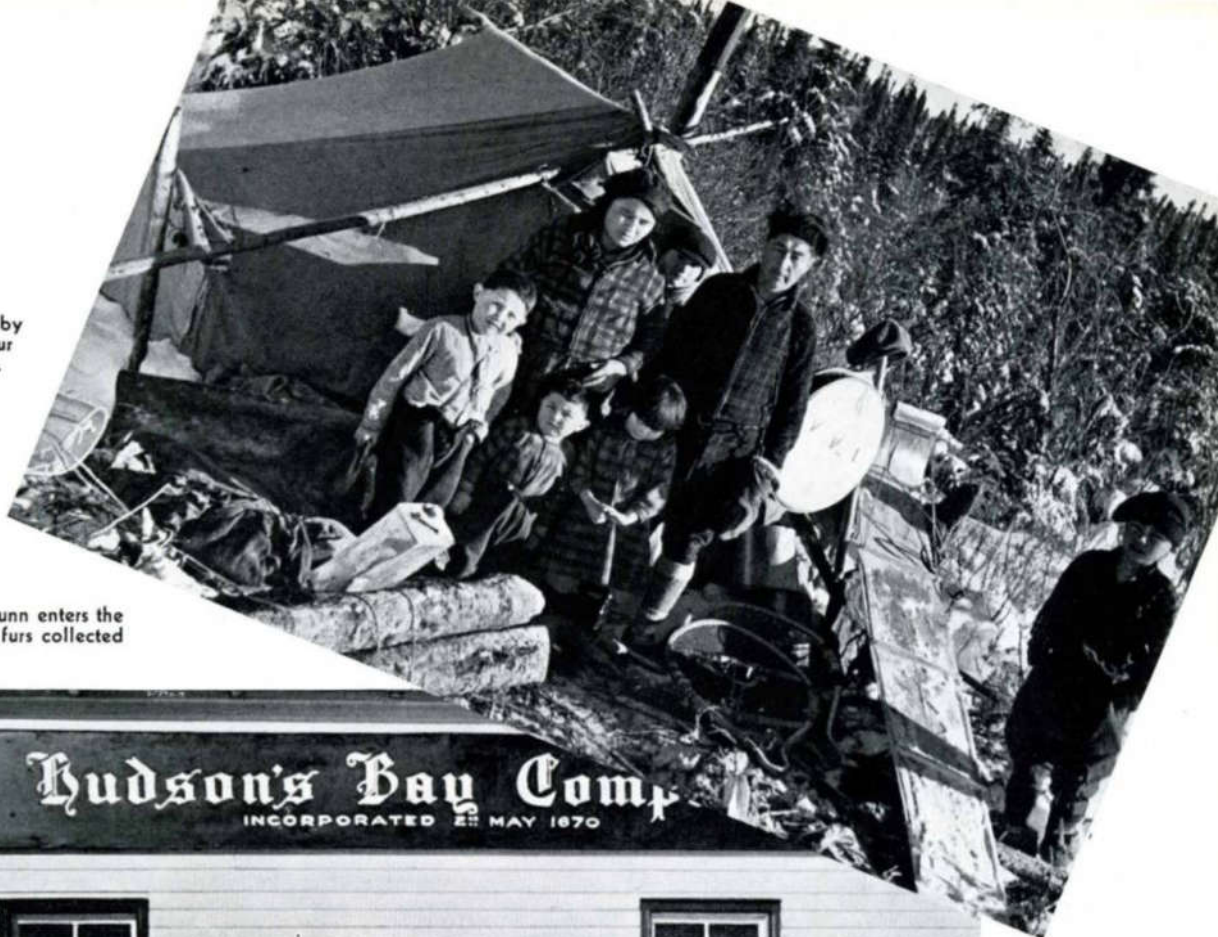


SINNY

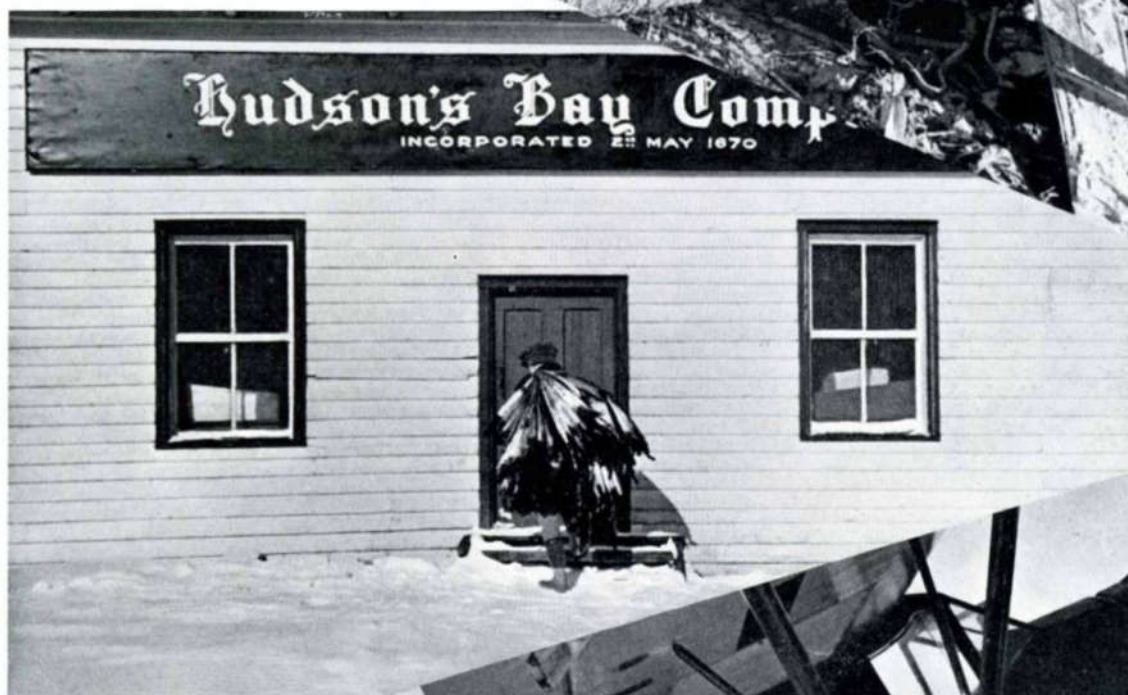
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Crone

An Indian camp visited by the post manager on a fur buying trip by plane. Note the drum and snowshoes.



Post Manager Dunn enters the store with some furs collected during the trip.



George Dunn sends off a small shipment of furs with Pilot Al Parker to the Company's Montreal office.

New Light on Simon McTavish

by W. S. Wallace
Toronto

An authority on the North-West Company sheds a kindly light on the genius who directed its operations.

I DO not think it would be a misuse of language to describe Simon McTavish, the guiding spirit of the North-West Company, as one of the great figures of Canadian history. He came to America about 1770, a penniless lad from the Highlands of Scotland; and before his death in Montreal in 1804 he had, by his genius for business organization, built up a commercial empire stretching from the Ottawa river to the Rockies, and from the 49th parallel of latitude to the Arctic circle—an empire of which he was the virtual emperor.

Yet almost to this day he has remained a mere shadow of a name. No one has attempted to tell, except in the barest outline, the story of his life—though that story has in it some of the elements of a Greek tragedy; and any attempts to depict his character have been so wide of the mark as to be the reverse of the truth.

The traditional view of Simon McTavish is to be found in the pages of Masson's *Les bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, where he appears as a sort of arrogant despot. "Mr. Simon McTavish," says Masson, "was very much disliked by the majority of the wintering partners [of the North-West Company], who, on account of his haughty demeanour, called him 'The Premier' or 'The Marquis.'" The same view was echoed by the late Dr. George Bryce in his *Sir Alexander Mackenzie*. "The old lion of Montreal, Simon McTavish," wrote Dr. Bryce, "had always borne the reputation of a tyrannical and domineering leader. As years fell upon him he became more and more unpopular. . . . The derisive nicknames *Le Marquis* and *Le Premier*, applied to McTavish, are indications of this feeling."

During recent years, however, there has come to light a good deal of documentary material which lends little or no support to this version of McTavish's character. In the Edgar Papers in the Detroit Public Library are several letters written by McTavish when at the beginning of his career; and in these he appears as a young man with a delightful sense of humour, a very human interest in the topics of conversation "over the Ladies Scandal Broth in the afternoons," and a partiality for "good wine, good Oysters, & pretty Girls." Simon McTavish must have changed greatly in twenty years if the engaging young man who emerges from his letters to William Edgar in 1774 was transformed into the ogre depicted by Masson and Bryce.

Other letters from Simon McTavish have been found in the Stratheona Papers handed over several

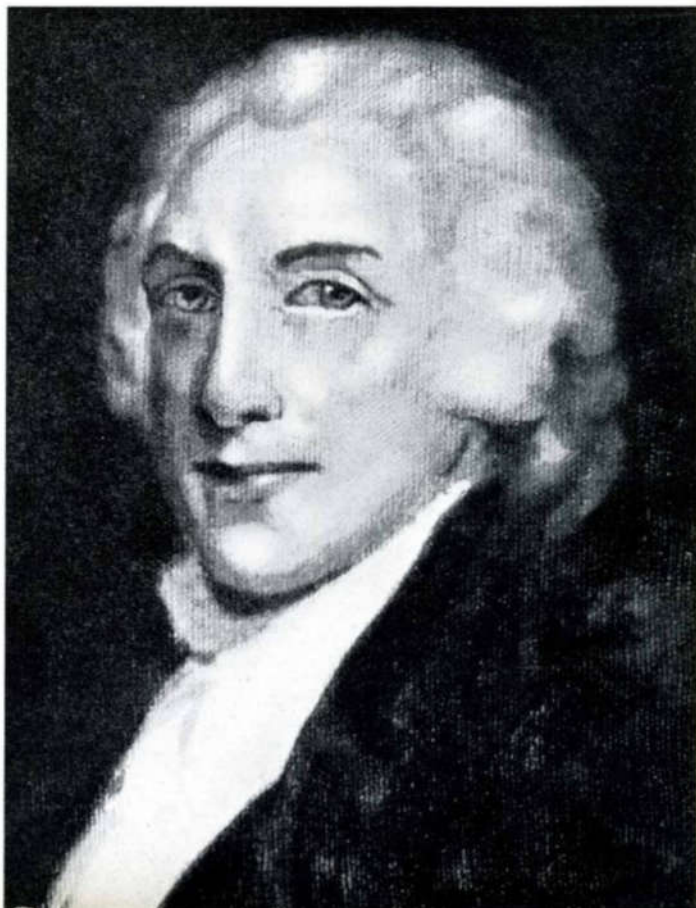
years ago by Lord Stratheona's heirs to the General Register House in Edinburgh. These would appear to form part of the official correspondence of the North-West Company which, in some way not now known, came into Lord Stratheona's possession about fifty years ago. Most of them are business letters, and they give evidence at every turn of the genius for business which made Simon McTavish the richest man in Montreal; but there is nothing to support the view that he was haughty and domineering. Even when things went wrong, the worst he did was to express his "Mortification and Disappointment."

Still further evidence of his character is to be found in his will, which is (or was) preserved in Somerset House in London. This is one of the most generous and kindly wills that was ever drawn. In it the testator left handsome legacies to all his relatives, as well as to several friends and god-children, and in case he had forgotten any of his relatives, he left £1000 for the purpose of "assisting such of my poor relations in Scotland as I may have neglected to provide for." Not only that, but he left a legacy to the children of a man he had bested in the law courts. I doubt if there could be found in the history of testamentary dispositions a more amazing clause than the following:

"I give and bequeath to the surviving children of William Kay, late of Montreal, aforesaid, merchant, deceased, the Sum of One thousand pounds current money aforesaid, as I am doubtful whether I was justly entitled to the amount of the judgment rendered in my favor in the Court of Appeals in this province against the Estate of the late William Kay, respecting the property of the late David McCrae."

If final proof were needed of the benevolent character of Simon McTavish, it would be found in a bundle of letters of which I have been permitted to make copies,

Simon McTavish, guiding genius of the North-West Company, from a portrait in the McCord Museum, McGill University.



through the kindness of Lady Grierson, who is a descendant of the chief of the Clan Tavish.

It would appear, from these letters, that about 1794 Simon McTavish, on one of his periodical business trips to the Old Country, decided to look up the chief of his clan. He himself belonged to a branch of the clan that had fled from Argyllshire several generations before, and had settled in the Fraser country in Inverness-shire; but that did not prevent him from claiming kinship with the Chief. The latter, Lachlan McTavish, was in financial straits, and had been compelled in 1785 to sell his ancestral home, Dunardry, to Col. John Campbell of Barbrech, who later disposed of it to Neil Malcolm, Esq. McTavish naturally welcomed the arrival of his rich kinsman from North America, and was persuaded by him to apply for the grant of armorial bearings, which neither he nor any of his ancestors had apparently ever bothered about.

"A kinsman of mine," wrote the Chief, "who has lately made his appearance in England with an immense Fortune, acquired in the wilds of North America, has put upon me to take out Arms.—To entitle me, however, to Supporters, to which as Chief I certainly have Right, it will be necessary to trace myself up to the Root."

Lachlan McTavish got his armorial bearings, and Simon McTavish, as his "kinsman," got permission to use the same arms. But shortly afterwards, in 1796, Lachlan McTavish died. He had evidently, however, banked heavily on Simon McTavish's friendship and loyalty to him as head of the clan; and his lawyer, one James Ferrier, of Edinburgh, immediately wrote to Simon McTavish advising him of the death of the Chief.

Simon McTavish's reply is among the letters in the bundle:

"Montreal, Jan'y 11th, 1797.

"Sir,

"A few days ago I received your favor of the 20th Sept. last, giving the unwelcome account of the death of my poor Friend Dunardry, and the embarrass'd situation of his affairs & Family; which, I regret very much. He was not deceived in reckoning on my friendly disposition towards him, and it was my intention to have assisted him in paying up what he owed Mr. Malcolm on his little Family property, as soon as I could with convenience spare the money. I find from your statement that but little has yet been paid on account, I think you apprehend the Family may be injured in getting rid of the purchase to Mr. Malcolm—to prevent which, if it will suit that Gentleman to wait for his money 'till May, 1798, I will pay him at that time, in London, with a years Interest that will then fall due, and take the purchase on my own Account; & perhaps at a future day one of the sons of my deceased Friend may be in a situation to redeem it; if this proposal proves satisfactory, or in case that Mr. Malcolm is pressing for his money—if any of the Friends of the Family can make it convenient to advance the purchase money till May '98—I will reimburse them at that period, & authorize you to make the necessary arrangements—if you will undertake the management of the business; I therefore request to hear from you on this subject by the first opportunity, and as letters in time of War are liable to miscarry it may be necessary to write in duplicate. As your forms in Scotland are different to what they are in



The McTavish mansion is seen in the lower right corner of this view of Montreal in 1852. The other large building is McGill University, now incorporated in the Arts building.

England—be so good as to send me a Copy of such power of attorney as may be necessary for me to send you, if my proposal is accepted of.—

"You'll please to acquaint the Widow that I will most cheerfully take charge of the second Boy, whenever he is qualified to come into a Compting House, & wish a proper attention may be paid to his Education—until he is 16—and if the expence will be inconvenient for the Family I will pay it.

"I remain very respectfully

Sir

Your Obedt. Humble Servt.

(Signed) SIMON MCTAVISH

"Jas. Ferrier, Esqr., Writer to
the Signet, Edinburgh."

In 1799 Simon McTavish bought Dunardry, which was a small estate on the borders of the Crinan canal, Argyllshire; and about the same time he took into the service of the North-West Company, John George McTavish, the second son of the Chief, who was destined to become a famous figure in the history of the Canadian fur trade. The numerous other McTavishes in the North-West Company were all close relatives of Simon McTavish; but John George McTavish was only a relative in the sense which permits every Scotsman to regard himself as a cousin of the chief.

It will thus be seen that Simon McTavish, far from being a hard-hearted and hard-fisted tyrant, was actually a kindly sentimentalist. The Fates, however, could not have dealt more harshly with him had he been a villain of the deepest dye. He died in Montreal in 1804, without perhaps ever having seen his Scottish estate, and while the mansion he was building in Montreal was still unfinished. His properties passed to his son William, then a small child, who died in England in 1816; and indeed all his four children died in England shortly before or after they reached their majority. There is (or was) a pathetic monument to their memory in the Chiswick Parish Church in London. The unfinished mansion he built on the slope of the mountain in Montreal, near the present McTavish Street, remained for over half a century "McTavish's haunted house," and was only torn down about 1860; and Dunardry is to-day only a name applied to a hill in North Knapdale parish, in Argyllshire.

How to Skin a Seal:



1. The Eskimo woman first makes a cut down the whole length of the seal from back flippers to lower lip. Throughout the whole operation she uses her semi-circular woman's knife or "ooloo."



2. From the carcass she then removes the fat and skin in one piece. Her baby sleeps soundly on her back, and her small daughter looks on with rapt attention, while her son keeps the dogs away.



3. Next she separates the fat from the skin by cutting between them with her ooloo. In the background her son with a long knife is cutting up the carcass into pieces suitable for dog-feed or the pot.



4. A closer view of the same operation, showing how the fat is pushed back in one great creamy roll. This is later packed into a sealskin bag or "dan" where it will render itself down into blubber.

in eight easy lessons

by Venerable D. B. Marsh
Eskimo Point



5. A trip to the edge of the sea, or lake—or, as here, to a crack in the sea ice—suffices to wash off all dirt and excess grease, and at the same time moistens the hair, thus making it easier to remove.



6. Back in her tent, she lays the skin down, hairy side up, with hairs pointing towards her. Weighting one end with a stone, she pulls the skin taut and cuts away the hair with a jerky, swinging motion.



7. This exposes the thin black skin, which is made into water-proof boots, kyaks, etc. To whiten the skin for fancy boots, she scalds it and scrapes away hair and black skin together, as here.



8. After making several cuts around the skin near the edge, she pegs it out on the ground with special pieces of bone, which she drives in with a stone. Her baby has slept peacefully through it all.



Discovery—I

Angus Gavin, who discovered the nesting grounds of Ross's Goose in July last year (see *The Beaver*, December 1940) has made another ornithological find. On June 26 this year, about twelve miles from the scene of his first discovery, he came upon the nesting grounds of the Tule goose, the whereabouts of which had until then remained a mystery.

This bird (*Anser albifrons gambelli*) is the larger form of the White-fronted goose, and weighs on an average about nine pounds full grown. Nests of the smaller type (*Anser albifrons*), which weighs only half as much, were found by Gavin five or six miles from the Tule grounds. But there was no intermingling of the two types. Unfortunately, he did not realize the importance of his discovery until he had returned to his post at Perry River and consulted his Taverner. And as no specimens or eggs were collected, the discovery must for the present remain unofficial. Like Ross's Goose, the Tule winters in the Sacramento Valley of California.



Ancient Mariner

One hundred and fifty years ago the first white man visited the site of the future city of Vancouver, B.C. He was José Maria Narvaez, a Spanish Don in command of the ship *Santa Saturnina*. Leaving Nootka, Vancouver Island, in June 1791, Narvaez sailed down Puget Sound towards the present Seattle and Tacoma. Then he turned north and eventually entered English Bay, where the present Port of Vancouver now lies. There he traded with the Indians, giving them bits of iron and barrel hoops from which they fashioned knives and awls and weapon points.

His fair treatment of the natives, and their resultant friendliness, was of great value to Captain George Vancouver when he arrived on the scene a year later. But while the English navigator's name has been immortalized by being given to the third largest city in Canada, the name of the Spanish pilot-commander who preceded him there has been almost forgotten. Major J. S. Matthews, the city archivist, has called attention to his discovery by compiling an attractive booklet on the sesquicentennial, copies of which can be obtained gratis from his office.

H.B.R.S.

Work is already well advanced on Volume V of the Hudson's Bay Record Society, *Minutes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1671-74*. Dealing as it does with the earliest period of the Company's existence, this volume should prove extraordinarily interesting. London reports that Dr. J. H. Clapham of the University of Cambridge, who is writing the introduction, is now a regular visitor to the Archives Department at Hudson's Bay House.

Volume IV, *McLoughlin's Fort Vancouver Letters*, is so far advanced that publication is expected by the end of the year. Students of west coast history are eagerly looking forward to its appearance, as it is expected to throw an entirely new light on the famous "Father of Oregon."



R.C.A.F.

On page 41, mention is made of two H B C airmen who are now serving with the R.C.A.F.—Paul Davoud and Harold Winny. As we go to press, news comes in of the promotion of Flight-Lieutenant Winny, who is instructing on Vancouver Island, to the rank of squadron leader. Wing Commander Davoud, formerly manager of transportation for the Fur Trade, also served as an instructor after he joined up. This year he went overseas to lead a squadron of night-fighters, and recently he was credited with shooting down a Dornier 217 bomber into the sea.



Tsk! Tsk!

From the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th edition, volume 9, page 941: "In 1680 Charles II of England granted to Prince Rupert and his associates of 'The Honourable Governor and Company of Gentlemen Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay' a charter giving practical monopoly and control over what is now the northern part of the Dominion of Canada, long known in literature as the 'Fur Countries.' This control was exercised by 'The Company' until many of its rights were relinquished at the time of confederation in 1867."

Story Contest

We always knew that fur traders were modest folk. But we had no idea, until this fall, that, compared to them, the proverbial violet is positively blatant. There are four hundred fur traders in the service of the Company, all of whom were invited, by radiogram, by mail, and by advertisements, to contribute to *The Beaver* story contest one or more articles entitled "My Most Exciting Experience in the Company's Service." And there were to be prizes for the three best, of \$50, \$30, and \$20.

The contest was announced in February, to close on October 31. Up to that time, exactly *nine* entries were received, and two of them were from the same man!

Some of them, fortunately, were of high calibre; and the best, by J. W. Nichols of Fort Fitzgerald, published in this issue, would probably have won against a hundred entries. The three judges were unanimous in their choice of his story for first place. One of them, Tom Gill, the American novelist, wrote of it with enthusiasm. The fact that it was jotted down from day to day, in the midst of bitter hardships, and with no thought of publication, shows the value of simplicity in story telling.

Neither does the fact that Nichols sent in his journal as an entry indicate that he is less modest than other fur traders. He kept it hidden away for sixteen years, although many an editor would have leapt at the chance to publish it. The only reason he agreed to enter the contest was that a Fur Trade personnel officer happened to see the diary while visiting Fort Fitzgerald, and persuaded him to send it to *The Beaver*, just in case it might be mildly interesting . . .

The second and third prizes were won by the man who sent in two stories, B. M. May, clerk at Povungnetuk, on Hudson Bay. One of these will appear in the March issue, the other later.



Discovery—II

Old documents of the North-West Company have recently come to light at Fort William. They are bills of lading for the North canoes plying from Fort William to Rainy Lake between 1806 and 1809. A list of the articles generally carried in these canoes was printed on each bill, and the quantities filled in by hand. The names of the voyageurs are also given. Unlike the bills of lading for the *canots de maitre* leaving Lachine, the Fort William forms are printed in English.

The discovery was made in the vaults of the public library. Shortly afterwards, the Fort William journal for 1823-4 was found there. It begins on October 18, when the schooner *Recovery* (aptly named so soon after the union) was launched. A week later, two Company men were sent to Grand Portage to see if any Americans were there, but they found the place deserted. On December 15, however, an Indian came in to report that some Americans were trading at Grand Marais.

The journal and the bills of lading will soon be exhibited in the new museum of the Thunder Bay Historical Society.

Coincidence

Not long ago, a subscriber wrote from Habana, Cuba, asking us what we could tell him about his grandfather, George Barnston, who was an officer of the Company about the middle of last century. Well, we said, one of the things we can tell you about him is that he is the central figure in our calendar picture for 1942, which is being reproduced on the cover of the December *Beaver*. As it happened, we'd only just found that out ourselves. All along we'd been under the impression that the name of Ballantyne's boss was Stone—that being the name Ballantyne gives him in *Hudson's Bay*. But, just to make sure, we looked up our Tadoussac file and discovered that the bourgeois there in 1846 was George Barnston. Then we looked up our Barnston file, and sent the data it contained to his grandson.

At the same time, we suggested that Mr. Dunlop might write an article on his grandfather for the December *Beaver*. And the result appears on page 16.



Submersion

The construction of the Grand Coulee dam in Washington State has pushed back the waters of the mighty Columbia River to such an extent that a dozen townsites have disappeared—or are disappearing—under the waves of the world's largest man-made lake. Most historic ground that now becomes submerged is the site of old Fort Colville, established in 1826 by John Warren Dease at Kettle Falls, and not abandoned until 1871. The State Historical Society monument that marked the fort's position has been removed to higher ground.

Kettle Falls was one of the ancestral fishing places of the local Indians, and before the falls disappeared under the rising waters, Indians from several reservations in the district gathered to mourn its "passing" in a three-day ceremony.



Contributors

Factor J. W. Anderson is manager of the Ungava District of the Fur Trade, which operates R.M.S. *Nascope*. . . S. R. Crone is clerk at Mistassiny post, on the lake of the same name, in Quebec. . . Doris Forbes is an eleven-year-old school girl of Red Deer, Alberta, who has trained up a beaver in the way it should go. . . Venerable D. B. Marsh, Archdeacon of Baffin Land, lives at Eskimo Point, Hudson Bay. He will be remembered as the author of "The North Changes" in *The Beaver* a year ago. . . J. W. Nichols, a Newfoundlander, is post manager at Fort Fitzgerald. He has served the Company in the Fur Trade for twenty-eight years. . . C. Parnell is a Winnipeg writer who specializes in the history of the Company. . . W. S. Wallace is the leading authority on the North-West Company. He is head of the library of the University of Toronto.



Book Reviews



THE VOYAGEUR'S HIGHWAY, by Grace Lee Nute.
The Minnesota Historical Society. St. Paul, 1941.
113 pages, maps and photographs.

THE author of this attractive handbook of Minnesota's border lake land is celebrated as a painstaking research worker and a reliable historian. But she is also a lover of the North Country, and here she draws upon her stores of knowledge in both these fields.

She has written *The Voyageur's Highway* at the suggestion of a Minnesota-born lawyer of Chicago, Frank Hubachek, who has come to know and love the country between Lake Superior and Rainy Lake through a quarter-century of roaming its trails and Waterways by 'shoe and canoe. This is a country typical of Northern Ontario and Quebec—a land of clear blue lakes, whose rocky shores are clothed with spruce and towering pine, where sportsmen go to hunt the moose, and to fish for fighting bass and trout and maskinonge. Yet its lure does not lie in the present alone, as Dr. Nute's little book so plainly shows.

Rupert Brooke, in his *Letters from America*, complained that the forests of the New World, unlike the storied woods of England, had no "ghosts" to lend them the warmth and charm of human associations down the years. That is true of most of our North Country. But this border region is redolent with the memories of men who blazed the trails of civilization across the continent.

The chain of lakes and rivers and portages from Grand Portage to Rainy Lake, which forms the boundary between Ontario and Minnesota to-day, was part of the great Voyageurs' Highway stretching from Montreal to the Pacific. Men like La Vérendrye, the two Alexander Henrys, Peter Pond, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, David Thompson, and Sir George Simpson, knew the route well; and Dr. John McLoughlin lived and traded there, first for the North-West Company, and later for the H B C. The Hudson's Bay Company, in fact, had a chain of forts all along this route from Lake Superior to Lake of the Woods—often in competition with the North-West and American Fur Companies—its first post there having been established in 1793.

The fact that this rich historical background is known to so few of the thousands who know the border region to-day gave Mr. Hubachek the idea of a book such as this; and his choice of Dr. Nute as the author could not have been a happier one. As one turns the pages, there passes in review against a backdrop of gray rocks and giant pines, a cavalcade of adventurers, from Radisson and Groseilliers, through the French, British, and American regimes, to the picturesque lumberjacks of the present century. Nor are the natural inhabitants of that beautiful country forgotten. Due attention is given to the Indians as well as to their wild brethren, the animals and birds.

Produced with artistry and imagination, *The Voyageur's Highway* is the kind of book that should be duplicated for many another region in North America, where a delightful present is combined with a stirring past—C. W.

ESKIMOLAND SPEAKS, by W. B. Van Valin. The
Caxton Printers, Caldwell, Idaho, 1941. 239 pages.

THIS book was written by an erstwhile missionary and teacher in Alaska. He has produced an authoritative work on Eskimo life that should rank high as a work of reference. The directness of the title is justified, for Mr. Van Valin is an ardent champion of the Eskimo, and he tells the story of their daily lives in well-chosen, descriptive phrases.

The narrative commences briskly in an atmosphere that is typical of anywhere in the Arctic. From the deck of a small schooner the reader is introduced to the Bering Sea with its rocky islands, walrus herds, plentiful bird life and hardy natives who wrest a livelihood from its ice-infested waters. Living as they do in close proximity to the polar ice-pack, the Eskimos of the north Alaskan coast lead a strenuous life.

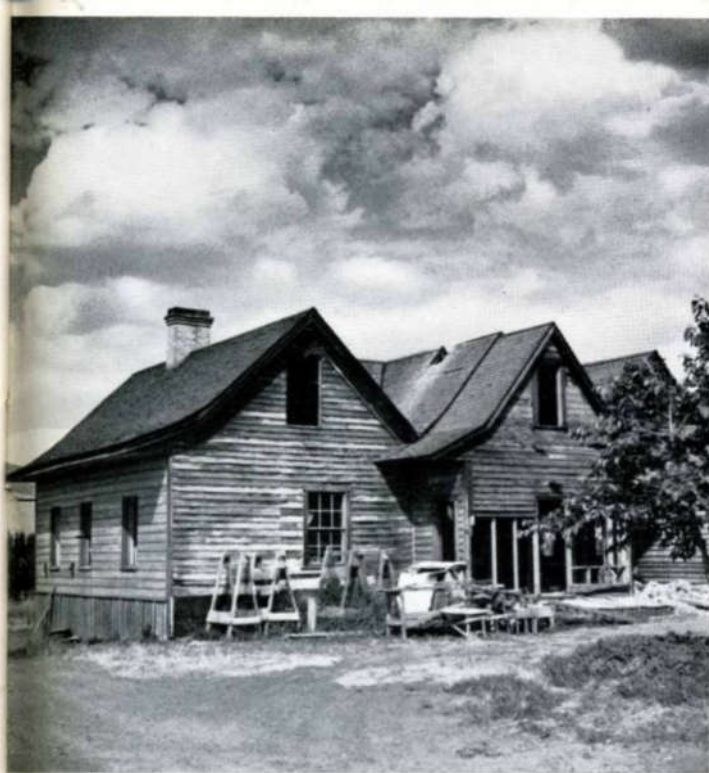
Hunting methods are described and compared with those of a past age, in a wealth of detail that grips the reader's interest. The entire economy of the Arctic is intelligently reviewed, from the conservation of the products of the hunt to the youngest industry of that "forlorn land"—reindeer husbandry. Into this economy, the author neatly dovetails the use of the Eskimo dog and explodes the theory of the reindeer as a practical means of travel.

There are chapters that provide thrills for those who relish big game hunting; there are bear and walrus stories and a very descriptive chapter on hunting the Bowhead and white whales. The methods used by the early Eskimo, who, in their frail skin boats, armed with harpoon and float and ripping lance challenged the "fleshy mountains" of the Arctic Sea, have now been superseded. Whaleboats and the deadly bomb guns have simplified the whaling art, but the danger is still great. The dying spasms of those mighty mammals thrill the reader, as he reads of ninety tons of maddened flesh threshing the sea into a white foam.

The story of Tuksarak, who drifted off on the pack, is well told. His resourcefulness and courage during the months of his drift is typical of his race. We read of his meeting with Siberian natives, his nonchalant return home after his long absence and the incredulity of his people, when he recounts his experiences, which drives him back to Siberia. There he has a reindeer tattooed on his back as proof of his veracity.

The climax of the book grips the imagination. Quite by accident an Eskimo, Ootoyuk by name, discovers a mound, from within which eighty-three corpses are exhumed. These forgotten people, it turns out, were of stone age culture, and yet, so perfectly were they preserved by ice, that, until disintegration followed contact with air, they looked as they had when some great tragedy overtook them, centuries before. One outstanding fact emerges from the relics that will be of interest to many readers—no evidence was found of the domestication of the dog. The find again raises the question, "Whence came the Eskimo?"

For those who are interested in the Arctic, and have unanswered questions concerning the country and the people, this book is invaluable.—A. Copland.



The old post at Kamloops, B.C., built in 1862-3 being torn down this summer to make way for an auto camp. It was constructed of adobe and hand-sawn lumber.

Silver model of the "Daryl," famous Eastern Arctic ship, "Presented to Ralph Parsons, Fur Trade Commissioner, Hudson's Bay Company, as a token of regard from the Men of the North, on the occasion of his retirement." It was specially made by the House of Silver Craft in Montreal.



These Eskimo and Indian choir boys and girls will soon be singing Christmas hymns in All Saints Cathedral, Aklavik.
Rt. Rev. A. L. Fleming.



The Mayor of Toronto congratulates Miss K. Stephenson of the Company's Winnipeg office, who was a member of the winning Canadian typing team at the Canadian National Exhibition. A member of the American team is on the right.

Boxes of British goods for the Christmas trade being unpacked at the Calgary store.



London Letter



View from the front of Beaver House, looking down Queen Victoria Street. Spots in the sky are barrage balloons.

LONDON, 6th October, 1941—Since May, and up to the time of writing, London has enjoyed a period of tranquillity as regards air raids, the alert having been sounded only on very rare occasions in one or two of the outlying districts. The lull has presented an opportunity of reviewing and further improving our black-out arrangements and measures for combating future air raids.

In view of the continued calls to National Service, our male staff has become further depleted, reducing the numbers available for fire watching, but we are glad to record that the women members of the staff have responded to the need, the following having volunteered to undertake these duties at Beaver House, thus replacing the men who have been called away: Misses J. Bell, H. Brummitt, L. Cowlin, L. Headley, L. Heron, A. Johnson, R. Kverndal, L. Leonard, W. Sharman, M. Snuggs.

We regret to have to report that H. J. Corner of the Accounts Department is the third casualty amongst our staff. We learned on September 13 that he had died from meningitis in a hospital in the Middle East.

St. Paul's, from the entrance to Beaver House, Great Trinity Lane.



Our congratulations are due to G. Cassin, who has been promoted to a commission as second lieutenant in the Royal Artillery.

Since the publication of previous lists of members of the staff serving with the Forces, R. W. Langwith (Fur Department) and L. Trewick (Cold Storage) have joined the Army.

We learn that G. C. Price of the Buying Department and J. C. LeGrove of the Accounts Department are now serving somewhere abroad. J. Flynn and E. J. Hooper of the Accounts Department are enrolled in the Empire Air Training Scheme and we hear that they are in Florida "having a grand time living on oranges, melons and ices."

We were glad to welcome recently Squadron Leader Paul Dayoud* serving with the Royal Canadian Air Force on this side; also Major Wilson of the Winnipeg Store Coal Department and Platoon Sergeant-Major A. C. Thomson of the Canadian Committee Office, who are serving with the Canadian Forces.

We are looking forward to again seeing F. R. Hynes, who was acting post manager at Whale River post, and are glad to learn that he will shortly be able to take advantage of the Governor and Mrs. Ashley Cooper's invitation to visit them at Hexton Manor.

L.-Corp. Jean Maurice des Groseilliers of the Canadian Forces called to see us recently. He was in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and was anxious to see the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company in view of the fact that he claims descent from the Sieur des Groseilliers who was largely responsible for the foundation of the Company.

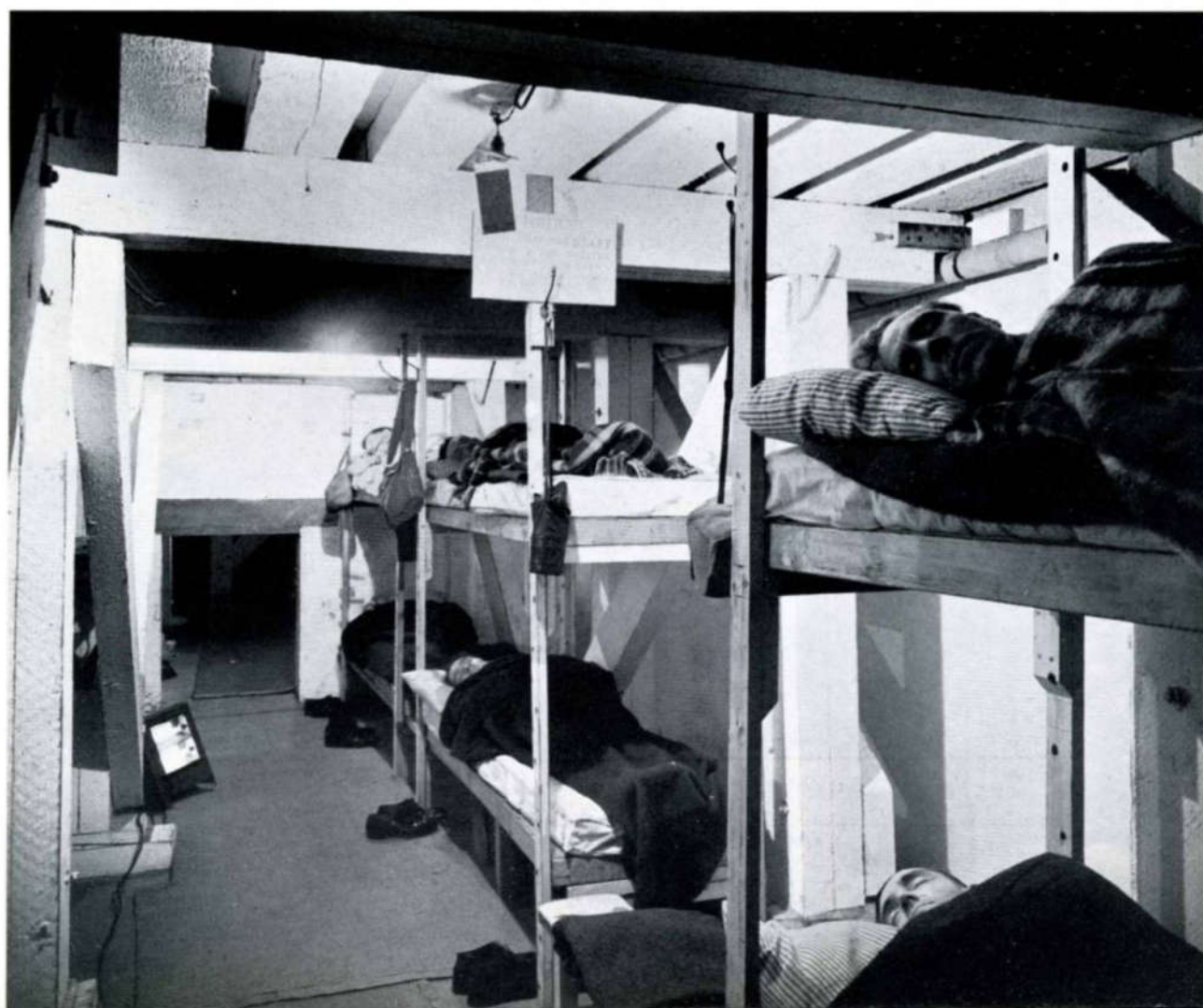
Preparation of volume IV of the publications of the Hudson's Bay Record Society—*McLoughlin's Fort Vancouver Letters*—is well advanced, and it is hoped to publish this volume about the end of the year.

* Now Wing-Commander.



Above: Members of the London staff amuse themselves after office hours during an "alert" in the sub-basement of Beaver House.

Below: Members of the night watch off duty from fire fighting, asleep in the bunks shown above folded against the wall.





Air raid damage in Sugar Loaf Court has provided more light for sorting furs in Beaver House, seen on the right.



Carting away debris from Garlick Hill, centre of the fur trade. The sign above the truck, protruding from Beaver House, reads "Beaver Hall"—the great fur trade auction room of the H B C.



Staff at work under difficulties in a section of the air raid shelter underneath Beaver House.

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BRITAIN



DELIVERS THE GOODS

*Never before did
a Christmas Gift
convey so much...*

HUDSON'S BAY *Point* BLANKETS



"The long Christmas Dinner"

THE VIANDS were ordered from London and Montreal long before, and the invitations given months ahead. The guests came a long way through the winter wilderness to spend the long Christmas dinner at the Hudson's Bay Company post where the factor was so fortunate as to have a wife to cook for him . . . or failing the wife, some of the whisky always reserved for Company officers, the best to be found in Scotland.

"BEST PROCURABLE" was then a sentimental link with home for the Scots

in the Canada fur trade . . . a distinction to the man who earned it, a privilege to those who enjoyed it . . . Still distilled, blended and bottled in Scotland, still possessing that memorable flavour, "B.P." ranks among the three best Scotches in the world.

Hudson's Bay
"Best Procurable"
 SCOTCH WHISKY



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